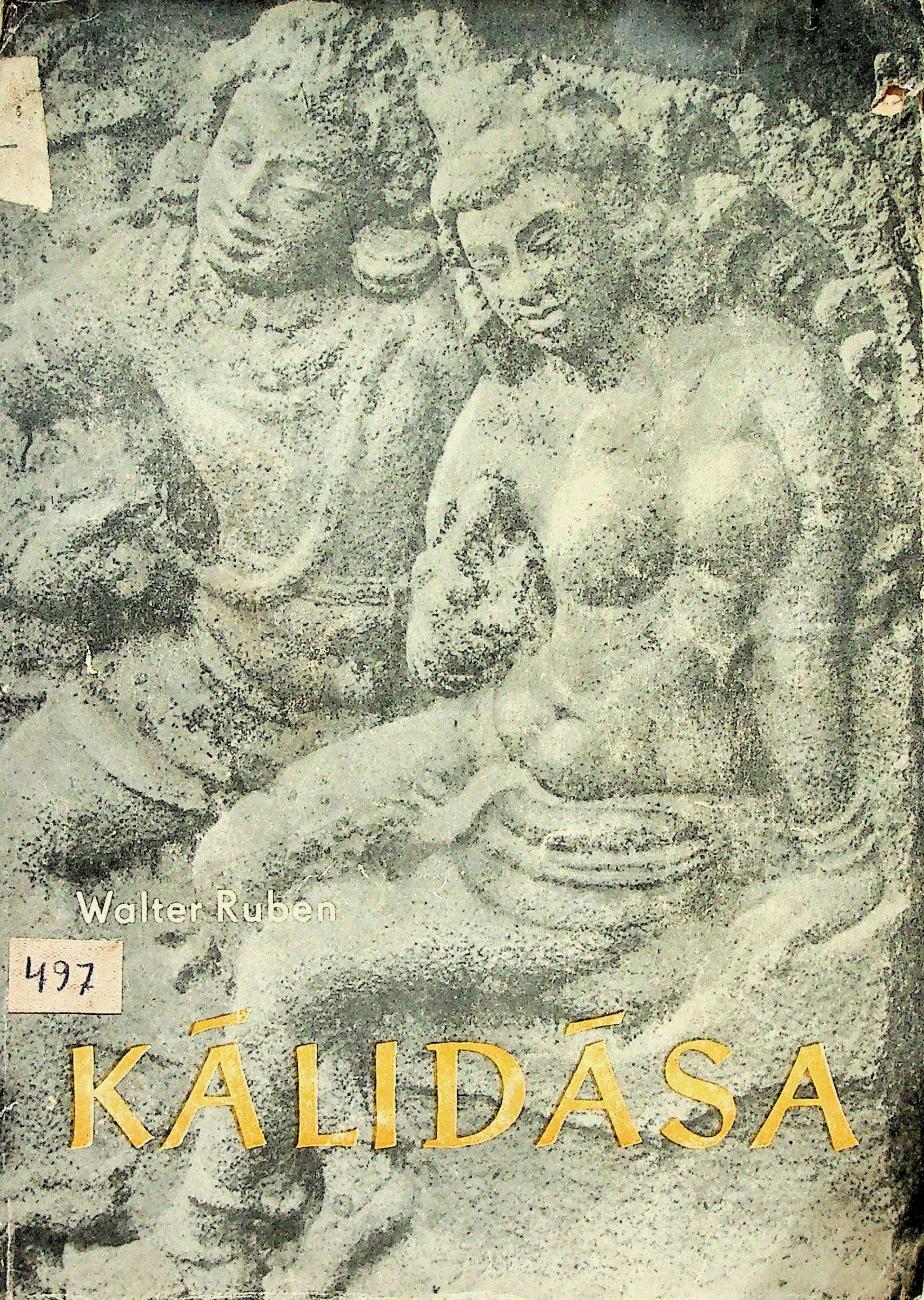

Walter Ruben

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KĀLIDĀSA

The human meaning of his works

by

WALTER RUBEN

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Kālidāsa is the great Indian classical poet of love, who created unfading visions of loving women, especially very young, almost childlike brides. These remind us of Goethe's Gretchen, who loved her Faust more than words could tell; of the fourteen-year-old Juliet and her Romeo—in Shakespeare's lines or in Ulanova's graceful and stirring dances; of Raphael's Sixtine Madonna, that good and deeply touching virgin mother; of Michael Angelo's Eve peeping from behind Jehovah's robes at the newly created Adam who is to be her mate; of Princess Nausicaa and her love for Odysseus, or the Greek Psyche and her beloved Amor. But all this would not suffice if we did not learn to love Kālidāsa's Śakuntalā, Pārvāti and Mālavikā.

On October 12th 1955 the World Peace Council in Vienna called on all peoples to pay tribute to Kālidāsa too in 1956. This little book is intended as a modest contribution to his memory. It lays no claim to deal with all the relevant historical and philological problems,[1] but is an effort to inspire readers for the human beauty of the works and characters created by this great poet who lived, loved and wrote more than a thousand years ago, far away under India's warm sun.

CONTENTS

1. How Kālidāsa's Works Reached Germany 7
2. The Life and Times of Kālidāsa 11
3. India in Kālidāsa's Time 13
4. The Cloud Messenger 23
5. Birth of the War God 31
6. The Line of Raghu 40
7. Śakuntalā or The Token Ring 50
8. Urvaśī Won by Valour 51
9. Mālavikā and Agnimitra 74
10. Kālidāsa's Influence up to Rabindranath Tagore 90

Annotations 100

1. How Kālidāsa's Works Reached Germany

Kālidāsa, the greatest poet of old India, became known in Europe in the last decade of the 18th century. At that time the English colonial rulers set up a centralised tax, law and administrative apparatus in the areas controlled by the East India Company which they had won since 1700 in their wars against the Indian princes and against the French who had previously been in control. These areas covered more than half of all India, and all higher offices were occupied by Englishmen.[2]

Sir William Jones, a cultured man and representative of the enlightened bourgeoisie, took over the post of judge in the Supreme Court of Bengal in 1783. In 1789, just at the outbreak of the French Revolution, Sir William published[3] Kālidāsa's drama "Śakuntalā" in an English prose translation, and thus demonstrated to an astonished Europe that old India had known the drama, the stage play. He called Kālidāsa the Indian Shakespeare—a somewhat lame comparison, nevertheless.

But in 1791, as the Jacobins–the revolutionary democrats–began to extend the revolution against the big landowners and the big bourgeoisie in France, Georg Forster, the Mainz Jacobin, produced his German prose translation of Jones' English version of "Śakuntalā"[4].

He sent a copy to Goethe, who was so enthusiastic about the drama that he sang its praises in two couplets:

> If in one word of blooms of early and fruits of riper years,
> Of excitement and enchantment I should tell,
> Of fulfillment and content, of Heaven and Earth;
> Then will I but say "Śakuntalā"[5] and have said all.

Goethe had the lines printed in the "Deutsche Monatsschrift" (German Monthly Journal) as early as 1791, and in the following year Herder, who was also living in Weimar at that time, set them at the head of his article "On the Eastern Drama". He mentioned Śakuntalā again in 1798: "since Sakontala is unfortunately still the only example of her (India's) perfected culture, one lingers with pleasure over it. We must have more Sakontalas in the near future, for they are the finest contributions to the cultural history of the peoples"[6].

Only five years later, in 1803, Herder published Forster's translation of the drama again and added a short dedication in which he gave renewed expression to his admiration for Kālidāsa. Friedrich Schlegel came to know Forster's first edition at the Leipzig Fair as soon as it appeared, and he wrote to his brother about this remarkable work[7]. He went later to Paris to learn Sanscrit and thereafter introduced the study of indology into Germany.

These few facts indicate how right Goethe was when he wrote later: "Recalling the enthusiasm with which we Germans welcomed this translation of Sakontala we can attribute the pleasure it gave us to the prose in which it came to us"[8].

Forster's work had a very considerable influence on German middleclass society.

Friedrich Rueckert translated the drama into German again in 1855—this time direct from the Sanscrit—but his version was only published in 1867, after his death.[9]

The publication of Heinrich Heine's posthumous works in 1869 brought to light that Heine had noticed something very important about our drama. In the chapter entitled "Thoughts and Ideas" he wrote: "Goethe made use of Sakontala at the beginning of Faust"[10]; here he means that Goethe conceived the idea of the "Vorspiel auf dem Theater" in Faust from the prologue to "Śakuntalā". In "Śakuntalā" an actor appears first on the stage and speaks a prayer to Śiva, for Indian drama is deeply rooted in the religious ceremony which used to fill several hours of the day and night. Then the stage director comes on, calls the leading actress and informs her that Kālidāsa's drama "Śakuntalā" is to be performed before a cultured audience, so that the actors must do their utmost.

"Madam, I tell you plainly that I value our theatrical talent only in so far as an enlightened audience derives pleasure from it. But I am filled with doubts of my own powers, however great my efforts." The stage director then calls on the leading actress to sing a strophe in praise of the prevailing summer season, and the play can begin.

Goethe's prologue takes the following course: the director comes out on the stage with the theatre poet and the comedian and asks both for their help. He is embarrassed, for his public is frighteningly well read. The poet refuses at first to hear anything of the people and thinks only of posterity. The comedian will hear nothing of posterity and wants only to amuse contemporaries. The director wants to produce an impressive spectacle.

"Plunge into the fullness of life", the comedian advises the poet; "everybody lives it, but few know it. And wherever you seize upon it, it is interesting."

The poet speaks of "the urge towards truth and the joy of deceiving". The three thus discourse on the deepest problems of art in witty dialogue, quite unlike Kālidāsa, who has only followed the old Indian custom in composing a short prologue which introduces the audience to the poet and the title of the play, since there were no theatre programmes. He takes this opportunity to flatter his audience, which was not composed of a crowd of people looking for entertainment, night after night, in professional theatres, as they were accustomed to do in Goethe's Weimar, but of a small group of gentlemen, nobles and Brahmans, higher officials, perhaps a few wealthy merchants, who gathered on some festive occasion in a comparatively small theatre or hall at the king's court to be entertained. The mass of the people did not even understand the language of the play—Sanscrit. Thus the two prologues are very different, indicating two different kinds of society, each with different expectations of the theatre. But we have to thank the Indian poet for inspiring Goethe to this gem of his art.

Goethe also became acquainted with Kālidāsa's lyric poem "Meghaduta", the Cloud Messenger, from H. H. Wilson's translation into English. In 1811 Wilson was appointed first secretary to the newly founded Asiatic Society in Bengal, and in 1813 he published his first work in Calcutta, the text and translation of the "Cloud Messenger"[11]. In this poem a spirit banned from the spirit world sends a message through a cloud to his beloved in his homeland. Goethe wrote one of his "tame epigrams" on this:

"What more pleasant could man wish?
Sakontala, Nala[12], these must one kiss;
And Megha-Duta, the cloud messenger,
Who would not send him to a soul sister!"

In his "Notes to the West-East Divan" he owns that: "The first meeting with a work such as this is always an event in our lives"[13]. But he also criticised Wilson's translation as too smooth and praised "unseren Kosegarten", who had translated a few verses from the original for him, "which assuredly gave quite a different impression"[14]. But in 1826 Wilhelm von Humboldt praised this poem of old India for its wonderful description of the beginning of the rainy season, when the first clouds come up from the South[15]. After C. Schuetz published the first prose translation of the poem in 1859 in Bielefeld, a number of others followed, some of them in verse[16].

In 1827 Wilson's English translation of Kālidāsa's drama "Urvaśī won by Valour" and a short summary of his third drama "Mālavikā and Agnimitra"[17] became known in Europe. "Mālavikā and Agnimitra" was first available to educated Germans through A. Weber's excellent German translation[18] in 1856. Since Wilson's time scholars had doubted the genuineness of this drama and had neglected it until this great Berlin indologist placed it in its proper light. No less a man than Lion Feuchtwanger prepared it for the German stage in 1917 under the title of "The King and the Dancer".

The Urvaśī play had been published as early as 1814 by Bollensen in a German translation. Rueckert had only included a few translated verses in his summary of 1834[19]. In 1833 Rueckert had also translated a few verses from Kālidāsa's epic poem, "The Line of Raghu"—the section containing Aja's mourning for his dead wife Indumatī[20]. A free metric translation of this work into German by A. F. von Schack appeared in 1890 and in prose by O. Walter in 1914.

Kālidāsa's sixth work, "The Birth of the War God", an epic poem, was translated by Griffith into English in 1879 and by O. Walter into German prose in 1913[21].

Thus it took over a hundred years for all six of Kālidāsa's works which have survived to reach us Germans in translations. Only in 1921 did the well-known indologist A. Hillebrandt first publish his work, "Kālidāsa, an Attempt at a Literary Appraisal", in Breslau. He deals with the times, works and art of the poet in 166 pages and comes to the conclusion that "Kālidāsa can never approach the popularity of our ancient classics amongst us". Indian literature is "too far removed from our sensitivity to compete with Homer or with the poet of the Antigone, or to hold permanently the interest of educated persons in the way Shakespeare or Dante does .... We find too little manly strength, too little dramatic élan, too little inner struggle and revolt against fate .... We demand deeper problems. Nevertheless, there is so much genuine and undying poetry in Kālidāsa's works that it is well worth the effort to make it available to people who will not be discouraged by certain outward characteristics"[22].

We are thankful for Hillebrandt's scholarly work, but can nevertheless not accept his judgment. The Germany of today is not the Germany of 1921. Hillebrandt then wrote for a narrow circle of educated persons who were searching for a way out of Germany's post-war misery to the treasures of world literature. (His book was written in 1918.) Today our working people are inspired by humanism, internationalism and love for all peoples of the earth to acquaint themselves with the works of the masters of international literature. Our people want to know where friendly hearts beat and are still beating amongst the people of other lands. Just as we are proud of our own cultural heritage, and seek to make it our own, so we wish to share the joy of other peoples in their past and present achievements. We shall not demand "revolt against fate" etc. from this old Indian classical poet. We want to learn what he meant to the Indian people. We realise that his works can give us today a very great deal as they stand. We try to understand him in his own background, and we find that he really was, as Goethe and Herder said, a great poet who loved his fellowmen and understood how to picture their passions, joys and sorrows vividly, and that he had a sharply critical and observant attitude towards the weaknesses of the ruling circles of his time. His speech is a weapon to capture the attention of his listeners, although this is not so easy to see from existing translations. He has the fantasy of the true poet who can hold his hearers and readers in his ban. And he has great humanity, so that one is eager to enter into his ban, for he can be gay and earnest and always reflects the world as it was.

Kālidāsa's world is strange to Europeans at first, of course. But research can help us to understand this world. Once through the strange outer boundaries, we quickly find the general human content within. Indians are different from Germans, people who lived during the early days of feudalism are different from people engaged in building the bases of socialism. But man is man, whatever the colour of his skin.

How poor we would remain if we confined ourselves to our own German or European culture. Forster, the Jacobin, wrote in his introduction in 1791: "Every country has its peculiarities, which influence the spiritual powers and the organisations of its people. If we compare these varying individualities and separate the general from the local, we shall arrive at the right understanding of mankind.... Here an entirely new vista opens up before our feelings and our imagination, an extraordinarily beautiful individuality of the human character.... It is necessary to set out clearly how the differences between Indian mythology, history and customs and the Greek, for instance, lend the art works of that country an unusual form and appearance to us, but also to show how the significant thing about such works is not whether they consist of five or seven scenes, but that the most delicate feelings which the human heart can sense can be just as finely expressed on the Ganges by dark brown people as on the Rhine, the Tiber or the Ilissus by our white races"[23].

2. *The Life and Times of Kālidāsa*

We know almost nothing—at least nothing certain—about the life and times of the great Kālidāsa. Various anecdotes, whose truth we cannot yet determine, are told in India. Kālidāsa is said to have been a Brahman who was early orphaned and grew up in poverty as a cow-herd. At that time a King of Benares wished to marry his daughter to a famous grammarian named Vararuci, but the Princess considered herself too learned for this scholar. Vararuci, thus scorned, met the handsome young cow-herd by chance as he sat on a branch and began to saw it off. He brought this poor, handsome and stupid boy to the Princess after impressing upon him that he must remain silent. So he stuttered only an odd word as he stood before the King, and Vararuci cleverly interpreted it as a wise saying. The youth gave no answer to questions asked by the Princess, and Vararuci explained that he was above answering questions put by a girl. The youth was then married to the Princess, who soon discovered the deception. But the stupid youth paid tribute of flowers to the great goddess Kālī until she rewarded him with a knowledge of grammar, logic and poetics[24]—the three branches of learning needed by a poet to help him write correctly, logically and poetically. The youth took the name of Kālidāsa, "Slave of Kālī"[25], as an expression of his gratitude.

Kālidāsa is said to have been an ornament of the mythical King Vikrama's court in the city of Ujjain. One day a poor Brahman came to the court; he wished to greet the king with the customary verse—"May three-fold happiness be yours" etc. But unfortunately he used the word meaning "embarrassment" instead of "happiness" by mistake. Kālidāsa sprang up and completed the verse quickly: "May three-fold embarrassment be yours. May Brahmans embarrass you with their attentiveness at court, your sons at table and your wife in bed". Thus Kālidāsa had become as versed as his mentor Vararuci; the attentiveness of Brahmans, his sons and his wife could not fail to please the King.

The poet is said to have died in Ceylon. King Kumāradāsa of Ceylon wrote one day on the wall of a courtesan's room the beginning of a verse (he was himself a poet) and offered gold as a prize for anyone who completed the verse. Kālidāsa did so, but the courtesan, greedy for gold, killed him, buried him and herself took credit for the poem. Of course the King detected the deception, for he was familiar with Kālidāsa's art.

Is it true that Kālidāsa was poor and a cow-herd? Similar tales of simpletons who were taught by the gracious gods have come down to us; for instance in the case of the grammarian Varsha, who is also said to have been a pupil of Vararuci[26]. Do the elements of social critical thinking in his works originate in his early poverty? These elements are in any case so carefully hidden (as was necessary under the old Indian despots) that Indian commentators have not mentioned them, and presumably, therefore, did not notice them. One can thus not claim that the anecdote about Kālidāsa's early poverty rests on this social criticism. This would seem to indicate a certain genuineness, even though the details about the Princess and Vararuci are improbable, for Vararuci is traditionally supposed to have lived much earlier than Kālidāsa. On the other hand, King Kumāradāsa of Ceylon is said to have ascended the throne in 515, and this seems to fit in with Kālidāsa's time, even though dates are often contradictory.

Presumably Kālidāsa was already well known in 473, for at that time a poet in Mandasor (which is near Kālidāsa's home) caused an inscription to be carved on the sun temple, some of whose verses are modelled on Kālidāsa's[27]. Others assert that Kālidāsa can only have composed one part of his "Line of Raghu" after 455. In this part he praises the mythical King Raghu on account of a victory which he won over the Huns. The oldest victory of an Indian king over the Huns known to us, however, was that of King Skandagupta of the glorious Gupta dynasty, who ascended the throne in 455. These scholars are therefore of the opinion that Kālidāsa carried this historic victory over to his mythical king. No Indian poet could have had such an idea before this time; Kālidāsa is therefore thought to have flattered his king with this mythical reference. If this were the case, Kālidāsa would have lived between Skandagupta's time (approximately 455–467) and Kumāradāsa's (515), but was already being imitated in 473.

Other indologists think that Kālidāsa had already lived under Samudragupta and (or) Candragupta II (375–375 or 375–413), and that he praised the victories of these in his works, and also that these two kings had taken the additional name of Vikrama, at whose court Kālidāsa is traditionally supposed to have lived. These questions are still not settled and we must confine ourselves to the statement that Kālidāsa appears to have lived in the 4th or 5th century.

Ujjain is generally accepted as the place where he worked, for he describes it lovingly in his "Cloud Messenger". Ujjain was from Samudragupta's time onwards[28] the capital of the mighty kingdom of the Gupta dynasty. The mythical Vikrama reigned in Ujjain, and Mandasor with its inscription in Kālidāsa's style lies not far northwest of it, so that his fame must have reached there very quickly, perhaps even during his lifetime. Ujjain was and is today one of the biggest vities, lying on the old trade route from the Arabian Sea to the middle Ganges calley, where another trade route leading south from Delhi-Mathurā to South India crosses it.

3. India in Kālidāsa's Time

If these chronological assumptions are correct, Kālidāsa lived in the times of the famous Gupta kings, a period between 320 and 455 which is generally regarded as India's golden age. In the times of the above-mentioned Candragupta II—perhaps also in Kālidāsa's time—a Chinese Buddhist, Fa Hsien, lived for about ten years in the Kingdom of the Guptas and left an enthusiastic description of conditions there.

Fa Hsien praised the government for its generosity, for instance, that no passes were needed, that there was no death penalty and that rebels only suffered punishment by having the right hand chopped off, that the people lived pious Buddhist lives, ate no meat, drank no wine, that there were no wine shops and no butchers' shops and so on. But he also mentions that Candālas, as "untouchables", lived apart from "clean" persons and, when they passed along crowded roads, had to tap a warning of their approach with a stick[29].

How far these descriptions correspond to the truth is doubtful. Buddhism plays but a small role in Kālidāsa's work, and the ascetic life none at all. The young queen in "Mālavikā and Agnimitra" even comes on to the stage in the third act in a slightly drunken condition, and is pleased about it, without being criticised by anyone on that account. And at the beginning of Act II of "Śakuntalā" the comic Brahman complains that there is practically nothing but meat roasted on the spit at the King's hunting excursion.

There can be no doubt that Buddhism was a living religion during this period in India, and that about that time the Buddhists developed a system of logic which is generally placed on a level with Aristotelian logic. Thus it can be assumed that the Buddhist pilgrim Fa Hsien saw only the Buddhist India of that period and Kālidāsa, as Śivaite only the Brahman India. It should, however, be noted that Fa Hsien mentions the sad fate of the "untouchables". We may conclude from this that the glory of the Gupta court was to a great extent built on human misery. And since he mentions the punishment of rebels, we must conclude that the power of the Guptas did not go unchallenged.

The historian of this "Golden Age" in India must not be so one-sided as Fa Hsien. The idea itself is unscientific. It derives from the old Greek mythological conception of a past paradisiacal golden age. It is our task to describe this period as accurately as possible and to place Kālidāsa and his work against this background.

The Gupta kings ruled over a mighty kingdom which included almost all of northern India, the broad Ganges basin between the Himalayas and the mountains of the Deccan, the northern area of which belongs to the West-East Narbadā line. In the mountain jungles farther south lived mainly tribes of hunters, gatherers and primitive planters still living under practically Stone Age conditions[30]. In the river valleys and scattered cultivated areas in southern India, however, there were already artisans working in iron, and there were kingdoms which could look back on centuries of history. But we still know little of these. Development in India was in fact very uneven.

In northern India, on the other hand, the first States had existed before 2000 BC. Here the primitive forests of the Ganges valley were almost all cut and ploughed in Kālidāsa's time. Here the Videha tribe, in the last stages of declines of the gentil society, was mentioned for the last time in the history of northern India at the beginning of the Gupta period. Here, shortly after the invasion of Alexander of Macedon in 326 BC, there had been a mighty kingdom which, however, existed only for four generations of its dynasty, the Maurya, similar to the Gupta kingdom itself, which began to decline in its fifth generation under Skandagupta.

The great kingdoms of antiquity, especially in the Orient, were usually only military-administrative formations of a temporary nature; they lacked economic unity, and the administration of wide areas presented enormous difficulties. The Gupta dynasty could, however, draw on the experiences of the Maurya. At all events, northern India was at that time not at all primitive, however much "Śakuntalā" may have seemed so to Forster as he compared these times with his own—the times of the French Revolution.

The great kingdom of the Mauryas belonged to the Indian slave period; the Guptas ushered in the period of feudalism. But we should not assume that there was such a dramatic change-over from the older to the newer stage in social development as in Europe. There were in old India neither revolts of slaves nor foreign invasions with such upheavals as those created within the Roman Empire by the invasions of the Germani in Gaul, Italy, Spain, North Africa and so on. The changeover from slave society to feudalism occurred so slowly and almost unnoticeably that only the most advanced indologists have of late attempted to describe it.

However, it seems that from the fifth century onwards feudal ownership of land began to develop[31]. But alongside this, marked elements of the old system remained for a long time. Possession of slaves was forbidden by law only in the first half of the nineteenth century. Kālidāsa therefore pictures courts where there were many men and women slaves; in his "Mālavikā" especially this theme is predominant. His kings are still despots such as would have ruled in India during the slave age. How the new feudal relationships affected Kālidāsa's court circles we still cannot say. We do not yet know which strata amongst the peoples of northern India were decisive in bringing in the new. It can at any rate be assumed that the beginnings of the new social order in Kālidāsa's surroundings must have been marked enough to provide the impetus for his optimistic, forward-looking attitude to life.

Trade was certainly one source of wealth and therefore of the waxing luxury of Ujjain and the Gupta kings. There had already been considerable trade with the Roman Empire through Alexandria for a couple of centuries. Seafarers had learnt how to take advantage of the monsoon winds for the East-West and West-East voyage over the Arabian Sea, and for some years past archaeologists have been discovering ever more remains of Roman trading posts on the Indian coast. Already in the second century a Greek seafarer described the shores of the Erithrean Sea, that is of India and Arabia etc. in a special book, for these shores were markets for many products, including slaves[32]. Bharukaccha, at the mouth of the Narbada river somewhat north of present-day Bombay, was the harbour from which the trade route passed through Ujjain into the Ganges valley.

There was undoubtedly a lively overland trade with Persia too, where the brilliant Sassanid dynasty ruled. Its power declined about 590, and had even earlier been weakened at times. As long as the dynasty remained powerful, however, the Sassanid kingdom acted as a bulwark which protected India from invasion by peoples, like the Huns, advancing from Inner Asia.

There must also have been a certain amount of trade with China at that time —partly via the land route through Inner Asia, partly by sea, on the one side from Bengal and on the other through Bharukaccha, Ujjain's sea port[33].

Quite another source of the glory of the Gupta kings may be found in the fact that before the Guptas strangers—the so-called Indo-scythians—had ruled in North West India, and especially in Ujjain for a couple of centuries. Perhaps the Guptas also became great because they understood how to make use of the liberation movement of the Indian people against foreign rule.

Ujjain was at that time not only the centre of the Gupta power, but also of Indian astronomy. Since about the third century old Indian astronomy had received powerful impetus through Alexandrian scholars. Greek-Roman astronomical works were revised by Indians, and Ujjain was the Greenwich of that time for the Hindus, for, as according to the Greek tradition through Alexandria, their meridian ran through this city. This scientific contact and development should be highly valued, and occasional references in Kālidāsa's works indicate the influence of Greek-Roman astronomy[34].

Mathematics are closely connected with astronomy in India. The famous mathematician and astronomer Āryabhatta lived and worked approximately in Kālidāsa's time. He is said to have been born in 476 and to have taught that the earth revolves round its own axis—a principle which he was, however, not able to establish.

There is no evidence of any outstanding medical teacher or doctor in Gupta times, but basic principles of medical science had been developed during the two preceding centuries.

Logic, as already indicated, was an important subject of study at that time. Of the Brahmans, mention should be made of Vātsyāyana in the Gupta period, who was the first to advance from evidence to conclusion, and of the Buddhists mention should be made of Dignāga, who made a systematic investigation of the possibilities of compulsive, probable and false conclusions[35].

Besides logic, a poet had above all to be versed in grammar and poetics, and Kālidāsa sometimes bristles a little with grammatical wisdom. Grammar had already been brought to completion about five hundred years previously, and all aspects of the Sanscrit language had been interpreted in rules. At latest half a millennium before Kālidāsa's time Sanscrit had ceased to be a living language and was spoken only by scholars and poets—who were of course also scholars. Educated persons, however, still understood it well enough to follow stage productions with pleasure, but the common people and the "uncultured" spoke people's languages, which represent a later stage in the development of Indian speech. In Kālidāsa's time the people's languages had already been used in many literary works for two or three centuries. Lyric poetry in the Mahārāshtra language was especially popular.

In consonance with this, dramatists allowed only Brahmans, kings and educated persons to speak Sanscrit on the stage, while generally speaking other characters, including women—even if they were queens—spoke in various people's languages which had been refined to literary forms. Kālidāsa occasionally allows an educated woman, such as the nun in "Mālavikā and Agnimitra", to speak Sanscrit. One must bear in mind that even a very short time ago there was a multiplicity of languages spoken in an Indian household, since the various wives and servants of a rich man came from different parts of India and perhaps only he himself, as a cultured person, spoke Sanscrit or English. Indian reality, therefore, varies little from that pictured in old Indian drama in this respect, except that the Sanscrit and the people's languages spoken in them differ from the spoken languages of today, and that even the people's languages were grammatically fixed.

With regard to poetics, the basic work of Bharata, probably older than Kālidāsa, deals with poetry, drama, dance, mime, metre, music and song and is an enormous compendium, difficult to understand. Its various parts do not show evidence of a unified character, but it is at present not possible to date the single sections or their compilation into a single work. Kālidāsa mentions Bharata as the author of such a textbook[36], but it is not certain whether he referred to the work in the form in which it is now available. No-one has yet undertaken a detailed investigation as to whether or to what extent Kālidāsa's art corresponds to Bharata's teachings.

Besides these teachings, the Indians of Kālidāsa's time also made a study of love, which seems to us an unusual subject of scientific study. This was an investigation of the strategy and economics of the forces in the love conflict between the sexes. This "science", as contained in the textbook of Vātsyāyana available to us, had probably been set down some time before Kālidāsa's day[37]. Many believe that Kālidāsa himself paid careful attention to the details of this teaching

In his epic, "The Birth of the War God", during the wedding of the two gods, the man's hand perspires from excitement; in his other epic, "The Line of Raghu", the wife's hand perspires during the wedding of Aja and Indumatī. The second description follows the instructions on love, and it was therefore cleverly supposed that the latter work was written later and that the poet here wished to correct the "mistake" he had made in the earlier work. It is of course not certain that the poet actually was such a "scholar" or pedant. Perhaps, on the contrary, he wished in his later epic to break away from his earlier slavish adherence to the tradition of love teachings. The order in which the two works were written is in fact not certain, and such arguments based on comparison are therefore not conclusive.

The love teachings are in all probability later than the old Indian teachings on the state, and may even be patterned on them. According to tradition the oldest textbook on the state was that of the minister of the first great kingdom—Kauṭalya, Minister of Candragupta. This text must have survived for centuries until it was re-written by Kāmandaka, who is assumed to have lived in the eighth century[38]. Kauṭalya wrote in a heavy scholarly prose style, Kāmandaka in easily intelligible verse. Kauṭalya wrote for statesmen, Kāmandaka for cultured persons, perhaps mainly for poets, who also had to be scholars and present their material not only in a grammatically, logically, poetically, metrically and dramatically perfect form, but must also understand the science of love and of the state, and even astronomy and possibly medicine. The educated public demanded rightly that poets be highly versed in the sciences. Here one must of course bear in mind that the sciences were not so advanced as they are today, so that the scientific opinions of the old Indian classical poets seem strange and naive to us. But we must also refrain from making light of their scientific education.

It is correct to compare the more naive poets of slave society with the learned poets of feudalism, but it is not true to say that the great poets of feudalism, like Kālidāsa, laid more stress on elegance of form and scholarliness than on originality and poetic talent. In the centuries of slave society, however, these sciences either did not exist at all or were only in their very early infancy.

Kālidāsa was definitely learned in the teachings on the state and was undoubtedly deeply interested in them. In his "Line of Raghu" he used many of the terms employed in these teachings. His ideas are very similar to those of the old Kauṭalya, and only seldom does one sense that he has learnt from a later work, which must be placed at a date somewhere between Kauṭalya and Kāmandaka[39].

According to the four point system as it appeared in Indian feudal times there were: 1. the love teachings, 2. teachings on the state, 3. teachings on law or morals and 4. teachings on salvation. The teachings on law were partly incorporated in the teachings on the state, i.e., that part which is actually jurisprudence. Moral teachings dealt with the rights and duties of the castes, for the same moral laws did not apply to all castes. The king, for example, must in accordance with duty kill, while killing is forbidden to ordinary mortals etc. Kālidāsa's attitude toward the moral laws of his time has not yet been sufficiently investigated.

Finally, religion incorporated the teachings on salvation. Kālidāsa was an active follower of Śiva and his wife, the great goddess Kālī, also known as Devī, Umā or Pārvāti. And Śivaism and Vishnuism are the two branches of feudal Brahman Hinduism, whose beginnings go back to the late slave age, in the last centuries BC. Its roots even stretch back to the beginnings of slave society (3000–2000 BC). At that time gods were worshipped in North West India one of whom very closely resembled the form of the dancing Śiva, the "Lord of the Dancers". At his side stood a cruel goddess. Another god of those times looks like a Buddha, and one resembles a Jaina saint. Bathing as a cult, in artificial lakes, and perhaps also temples, were presumably known at that time too.

But when the Vedic tribes invaded India (1500 BC), they brought with them an entirely different religion, without pictures, statues or temples, which centred round a magical fire cult. This Vedic religion prevailed in various stages of the old Indian slave society, but Buddhism and Jinnism appeared as rivals. In the last stages of slave society, however, the gods Vishnu, Śiva and his wife returned to a place of honour, and in the first centuries of our era temple buildings and portraits of the gods developed in the grand style. Wonderful works of religious art have come downto us from the Gupta period. The development of the Purānas, an extensive mythologicaltheological literature, coincides with the development of Hinduism. To understand the special character of this literature, however, one must glance back at the literature of the Indian slave age.

Myths, sagas and semi-historical happenings must have been sung in epic form amongst the peoples in very early times; more than 500 years before Kālidāsa Brahmans must have created the two great Indian epics, the "Mahābhārata" and "Rāmāyana", in this way. They modified them according to Vishnu traditions, but Śiva also plays a considerable role in the "Mahābhārata". Later poets took most of their subject matter from these epics. Kālidāsa took the subject of his "Line of Raghu" from the Rāmāyana and of his "Śakuntalā"‹ "Urvaśī" and "The Birth of the War God" from the Mahābhārata.

But in the first centuries of our era the Brahmans also composed Purānas after the pattern of the epics. In particular they continued the lines of descent from the heroes which they found in the two epics and merged them in an extensive and complicated system of creation and of the birth of the gods. They were more theological than the epics, laid less stresss on broad epic action than on a varied mixture of theological tracts (in epic verse) on cults of the gods and death rites, moral lessons, mystical speculations, songs in praise of the gods and so forth. The various Purānas originated at various times throughout the feudal era, and each was probably originally connected with a big temple as cult centre of one of the great gods.

So when Kālidāsa, for example, in his "Line of Raghu", deals with the ancestors and descendants of the mythical hero Rāma, he did not take their order entirely from the Rāmāyana, the old epic of that hero, nor entirely from the Vishnu

Purāna, or from any other surviving Purāna, but his material is certainly of Purāna origin and so is the poet's religion.

There were certainly remains of the Vedic religion in his time. In the fifth act of "Śakuntalā", for instance, the king permits a delegation of forest hermits to be received by his teacher and palace priest Somarāta. He then has them led into the hall of the Vedic fire cult, receives them there himself and finally acts in accordance with the advice of his palace priest. Since old Vedic times the palace priest had carried out the magic rites for the people and for the king and had protected the king in particular against evil magic; he was a kind of magician and fire priest. In old Vedic literature he stood as a mighty power beside the King, as his helper, but also as one who exacts honour and tribute. In Kauṭalya's book of state the palace priest is the highest paid state official[40], but he plays no active role in politics there. In Manu's book of moral law the position of the palace priest is similarly described[41]. Thus Kālidāsa portrayed his court priest after the long-lived Vedic tradition.

In Manu VII,58 it is further stated that the king should discuss all important political questions with a learned Brahman as the most worthy of his ministers. The kings in Kālidāsa's "Mālavikā" and "Śakuntalā" do actually consult with a minister over certain questions—in "Mālavikā" even with a council of ministers[42]—but not especially with a learned Brahman. On the other hand Kālidāsa's kings have a Brahman as comic figure near them, according to the custom of the Indian theatre. This jester speaks in bad dialect, is greedy, conceited, cowardly, cunning—but a true helper of his master in affairs of the heart. He is the king's chief confidant and the king makes use of him in his intrigues with women of his harem. He is his minister in matters which do not concern the state, says the king in "Mālavikā"[43]. He is loyal to his master and really helps him; that is why certain court ladies dislike him and rightly bear him a grudge.

A figure of this type can only have reached the classical Indian drama from folk art. Not only amongst the people, but also in court circles considerable anger, scorn and hatred had gathered against the Brahmans, with their claims to be the highest class in Indian society. In Kālidāsa's time the Brahmans had for more than a thousand years, through the whole slave period, governed society (with more or less success). A certain amount of criticism and opposition had already begun under the old Upanishads against the unlimited claims of the Vedic Brahmans and the Buddhists and Jainas had to a great extent asserted themselves because of their contrast to the Brahmans. In both serious and humorous stories Brahmans were painted black. In the Indian classical drama, however, they act as comic figures, and Kālidāsa joined in this popular tradition with loving artistry. Although he was himself a Brahman of high rank, he had supposedly grown up as a cow-herd, knew poverty and looked with irony on these cringing court hangers-on, so proud of their noble blood.

Amongst other things the Brahmans claimed the monopoly of teaching, and in order to preserve their claim they had seen to it that the script already known in India and used for practical purposes should not be used for transcribing

Vedic literature or for the popular epics, which they claimed for themselves. During the entire slave period the Buddhists and Jaina also handed down their literature by word of mouth only, as the secret knowledge of those entitled to it.

But this changed at the beginning of the feudal period, although we are not yet able to point to the causes of this in social development. The wealth of Purānic literature could not have grown up without writing. The Purānic Brahmans now popularised their Hindu theology, mythology etc. in the Purānas, so that all cultured persons should read them. Thus the Śiva religion, Vishnu and so on were first dressed in priestly Brahman form, which is in its essence strange to us Europeans. God is presented therein in an extremely human form. He lives like a king in his temple, which is a replica of his heavenly mansion. Here he is served, fed, entertained with song and dance, excursions etc., like a king. Here he loves his wife, begets children and experiences all the human emotions, love and anger, only in "godly" measure, in mighty proportions such as the little man should visualise it. Men were to be loyal and slavishly obedient to the god as to a despotic king, recognising humbly and without envy their complete subjection to every mysterious mood of the great one.

But the tendency appeared again and again in Hinduism to show the god as loving, just and a helper of mankind against the great despots with their arbitrary rule, who thus strove to confine the oppressors within bounds[44]. Kālidāsa loved his Śiva as the great man who concerned himself with everything human, who himself felt warmly—even passionately—and thus, especially in "The Birth of the War God", stands before mankind as a great example of warm humanity.

In Kālidāsa's time Buddhism had also set up the Mahāyāna, a new feudalist form alongside its old form, in which Buddha, like Śiva or Vishnu, was honoured in temples. But this is barely detectable in Kālidāsa's works. In "Malavikā" there appears a clever, cunning, practically minded Buddhist nun, who is portrayed with sympathy by the Śivaitic poet. Kālidāsa was in fact tolerant—tolerant also towards Vishnuism (as is shown in a great song of praise in the "Line of Raghu")[45]. Religious tolerance is frequently praised as a virtue in India, and Kālidāsa emphasised the joy of living, the earthly happiness of this Buddhist woman—and also of his Śiva—far more than the longing for the beyond.

Although in the Buddhism of the slave period and also in the later Vedic religion the practice of Yoga was strenguously propagated as the model of the self-sacrificing and humble way of life, and although theologians of all kinds preached an ideal of complete peace and apathy as opposed to one of active living—and this ideal has survived in its latest forms right down to our own times—yet there were others who even during the slave period presented the ideal of positive active living. Kālidāsa in his poetry did not enter theoretically into these contrasting views, but his whole work and also his piety are brimfull of the joy of living.

Let us turn now from science and religion to art. Alongside the above-mentioned architecture and plastic art, some of which has been preserved to us out of the Gupta period, special mention should be made of painting. Wonderful documents of the painting of that time have come down to us in the frescoes on the Buddhist rock temples of Ajanta. Although these were painted in Buddhist monuments and have pious legends and so forth for their subjects, the painters were artists enough to paint their princes and princesses with their courts in wonderfully perfect human forms. We can often well imagine the modest and beautiful young women in these paintings as illustrations to the delightul poses of maidens and women in Kālidāsa's poems; or expressed the other way round, Kālidāsa may very well have had such pictures of the great artists of that time in mind when he portrayed many of his women. But painting as such also plays a part in Kālidāsa's works. His heroes and heroines are versed in this fine art, as was required of cultured persons according to the teachings on love. In their love longings they paint the beloved, or a king recognises in a monumental court painting a beauty whom he then, as in "Mālavikā", tries by every means to discover in the flesh in order to confess his love for her.

In the field of literature mention has already been made of the epics and the Purānas as creations of a period before Kālidāsa's time. But lyric poetry too was at that time in full flower. The people of Indian primitive times had presumably long before the arrival of the Vedic races sung their songs and danced at their festivals; at any rate this is done by those who today have been able to a great extent to preserve their old way of life in the jungles[46]. In the epics, especially in the Rāmāyana, there are lyrical passages which influenced later works and thus also Kālidāsa. "The Cloud Messenger" is evidence of this. About the second century of our time a King Hāla is said to have collected an anthology of 700 strophes, all in the Mahārāshtra language. This points to the popular origin of this lyric poetry, which combines nature and love lyric in the finest way. Thus Kālidāsa also drew on an old tradition in his lyric poetry.

In Kālidāsa, however, as in classical Indian drama in general, lyric poetry is connected with the dance, and so it was in primitive society too. But by this time it was no longer a question of a singing and dancing community, but of court singers and artistically developed dances and poetry. At the beginning of "Mālavikā" Kālidāsa shows a competition between two dancers and their teachers. In the prologue to "Śakuntalā" the actress sings of the beauties of summer and so on. Act IV of "Urvaśī" has real operatic quality; the hero seeks his lost love, singing and dancing with mime. In Act I of "Śakuntalā" Śakuntalā shows in mime and dance how she is molested by a bee, and the king speaks suitable verses and at the same time follows her movements. We can unfortunately only imagine very palely the full sensual beauty of this dramatic aspect of Kālidāsa's drama.

Kālidāsa was also by no means the first Indian to write drama. The first beginnings of Indian drama may already be found in the cult performances of primitive times. Among the Santals and others, scenes are known to us in which at certain festivals men played the roles of gods and dead persons[47]. But this is not yet theatre. Dramas were also played at festivals later, and Kālidāsa's drama too. But no drama has come down to us out of the long centuries of slavery in India. At that time, in addition to certain cult scenes in Vedic ritual and in those scenes of the non-Vedic jungle tribes there were only leapers, singers and so on, who entertained the court and the people. The Book of State, for instance, recommends not to distract peasants from their work with such things, and all kinds of jugglers are pictured in old Buddhist literature.

As far as we know the oldest Indian dramas were written by the Buddhist Aśvaghosha in the second century A.D.; only small fragments of these are now available, but they show that various popular languages and the comic figure were already present.

The Buddhist wrote pious pieces calculated to convert the impious. But Kālidāsa is far removed from such religious tendency. He himself mentions predecessors, writers of drama, amongst them a certain Bhasa, under whose name a number of dramas have survived. Whether these, or all of these, are genuine or so old is still a question of dispute amongst researchers; but it is not impossible that some of his dramas, such as that on the love adventures of the famous king Udayana, for instance, are older than those of Kālidāsa. They are at least considerably more primitive, especially in their dealings with love. There are two other dramas—the "Vasantasenā" (Clay Cradle) by Śūdraka and the "Signet Ring and Rākshasa" by Viśākhadatta—about which no decision has yet been reached as to whether they are older, contemporary with or later than Kālidāsa. In any case, Kālidāsa stands out as a very great master of his art when considered against the background of these works.

The oldest epics are the work of Aśvaghosha. After the two old epics of Māhabhārata and Rāmāyana the Buddhists thought it necessary to compose an epic life history of their Buddha as a means of propagating the new form of Buddhism, and Aśvaghosha wrote such a "Life of Buddha" in epic form, and in addition a more idyllic work in which he tells of the great love of a Prince Sundarananda for his wife and his conversion to Buddhism, which leads him to retire from worldly life. Thus Kālidāsa could also look back on this tradition. Whether anything valuable appeared during the intervening centuries we still do not know.

The creation and survival of these early feudal lyric, epic and dramatic works must be attributed to the use of writing for literary purposes which was introduced at that time. But social developments also played an important part, for the need for such art forms first made itself felt in kingly courts. We cannot yet of course say why this need was first felt by feudal courts and not earlier by those of the slave age, however. We must imagine how the kings of old times gathered scholars and learned men about them and held discussions on theological, philosophical and other questions. Poets like Kālidāsa and Aśvaghosha nevertheless appeared later, and they were amongst the first to display their art and compete for the favour of princes and their courtiers.

We do not meet any such gathering of scholars in Kālidāsa's works, so that we cannot yet picture them in detail. It is only from later poems that we get a fairly clear impression of these struggles for patronage at the princely courts.

But it is necessary to do this if we wish to do Kālidāsa justice. We must keep the poet's surroundings in mind—surroundings in which scholars and learned men, experts in grammar, logic, poetics, theology, the laws of love and of the state, passed judgment on the art of painters, poets and so on and, in the unusually luxurious life of this comparatively late, refined and by no means naive Gupta society of the fifth century, decided finally whether works of art were worthy of being copied again and again, and thus of surviving down to our own times. That six works of Kālidāsa (these at least indisputably his!)[48] have thus survived is a sure sign of their unusual popularity, and a knowledge of them reveals that their popularity was and is well founded. (It should also be borne in mind that handwriting survives only a short time in the Indian climate, so that copying at great expense had to be repeated frequently).

4. The Cloud Messenger

The order in which Kālidāsa's six works appeared has not yet been determined[49], since no decisive indications have been found. They can therefore only be dealt with singly, and we begin here somewhat arbitrarily with the lyrical poem, "The Cloud Messenger", since it is the shortest and the easiest to see as a whole.

There are about 112 strophes in the poem, the number varying slightly in the various handwritten copies available[50]. All the strophes are in the same metre, called Mandakranta, which consists of four lines, each in the following difficult rhythm:

— — — — / ◡ ◡ ◡ ◡ ◡ — / — ◡ — — ◡ — —

This is one of those metres which we Europeans can appreciate only with difficulty, since it cannot easily be brought into $^3/_4$ or $^4/_4$ stress. Although the Indian poet was under no necessity to rhyme, it is no easy task to compose 112 strophes, each of four lines, in free and pleasing language without meaningless stop-gaps—and above all with true lyrical content.

> The first strophe already tells how a yaksha (who remains nameless throughout), a servant spirit of Kubera, god of wealth, was banished from his kingdom for one year, as punishment for a neglect of duty. He dwelt on the Rāma peak, whose waters were sanctified by Sītā's bathings.
>
> His master's curse weighed heavy upon him, for he must now suffer separation from his beloved.

According to Indian mythology Kubera's kingdom lay north of the Himalayas, on the northern slopes of the trans-Himalaya (in Tibet, we should now say—a land which the Indians at that time believed to be a dwelling-place of the gods). The Rāma mountain, however, lies in the mountains of central India south of the Ganges valley, somewhere in the region of the modern Nagpur and not far from the railway linking Bombay with Calcutta. In between lies the Ganges valley, cultivated land between inhospitable mountains. This southern mountainous region was only later influenced by Brahman culture and is today, with its mountain jungles, still the home of innumerable primitive tribes which have no Sanscrit-related speech, so that from Vedic times onwards they were hated as strangers and enemies by the Hindu.

The epic hero Rāma and his wife Sītā, banned for 14 years from the Ganges valley, had retreated in olden times into these southerly mountain fastnesses, and the mountain is named after him, for he had lived there as hermit and hunter. Sītā remains today a model of the virtuous wife to the Hindu. She was taken away from Rāma during his banishment by the demon Rāvana, and remained with him in Lankā (said to be Ceylon) for two years until Rāma won her back. This touching love story of the noble couple is told by Kālidāsa in "The Line of Raghu".

Here in "The Cloud Messenger" the banned spirit thinks of Sītā, convinced that his beloved is as true to him as Sītā was to Rāma, as he mentions her later.

> At the beginning of the rainy season the spirit in his grief saw a cloud approaching and fell into deep thought. He bravely held back his tears but could barely hold himself upright. At the time of cloud-appearing even the happy heart is troubled, and how much more deeply troubled is he who longs for the embrace of his far-away loved one?

After the oppressive, daily increasing heat of summer, the first shadow of the clouds and the first shower of rain brings joyous relief to man and nature. In the rainy season, however, all wanderers, traders and even wandering monks paused to rest and travellers returned quickly home, for journeying during the rainy season is impossible. How bitter for him who is banished and cannot return home!

> The spirit resolved to ask the cloud to bring a message to his beloved that he still lives. He greeted the cloud.

Thus is the theme of the poem presented. The spirit's situation is described The listener is touched and eager to hear more. Not to fall into sentimentality but rather to cheer his listener, the poet then strikes a humorous note:

> a cloud is massed radiance and vapour, wind and water—a message is for mortals to deliver. What has a cloud to do with it? But the yearning spirit had no thought for this, for the love-lorn do not consider whether a cloud has a soul or not.

A lesser poet than Kālidāsa would not so early have ventured to dash cold water on the listeners' sentimental mood, or to season his invention with such ironical comment.

The rest of the poem consists of the spirit's monologue to the cloud. The monologue itself is clearly divided into sections. First, to ensure success, the spirit addresses and flatters the cloud:

> Your lineage I know, O minister of Indra (god of rain), for you are descended from the famous rain-cloud line. That is why I appeal to you, for it is better to pray in vain to Virtue than to win desire of Dullness.

So humbly and even dishonestly (for he wanted to succeed) did one approach a highly placed personage in despotic old India, and the listeners must have been amused at the thought of the spirit in his mountain fastness prostrating himself before a cloud, just as they were daily wont to do.

> You shall fly as my messenger to Alakā, city of the god of wealth. On the way the travellers' wives, their tresses afloat in air, shall see you and shall have new faith that their loved ones are soon to return. For when you approach every man turns loving thoughts to his wife. There is none other in my sad state, whose fate lies in his lord's hand!
>
> The way I shall first describe to you. Then you shall hear my message. Go north and then veer westward. Countrywomen's eyes shall drink in the sight of you, for on you depends the fruitfulness of their fields. They know not the coy arts of city court ladies, but their eyes shall shine with joy and love for you.
>
> Linger awhile on the mountain whose bowers delight the woodmen's wives. Shed your showers and quaff new waters from the rivers. Then fly on till you reach the mansions of Vidiśā and the Nīca mountain whose caverns, perfumed with the scent of harlots, tell of townsmen's leashless revelries. Rest there and move on to cast your shadow over the gentle gatherers of flowers.
>
> Then onward due north, but pause a while to view Ujjain. If your heart be not warmed by glances from town girls' eyes that quiver and shiver at your lightning's flash, then you are cheated of life's reward. You will have your pleasure there of the lovely river Nirvindhyā and of the widespread city, which is like a corner of heaven brought down by the gods as part of their holy reward when they were reborn on earth.

According to Indian teachings on soul wandering, gods are nothing but human beings who, on account of their piety, are born again in Heaven. Here they live out the rewards of their virtue and then are reborn on earth once more. A part of their reward remains, the poet thinks, so that they may plant a piece of heaven on earth where they can live happily. Thus the poet praises Ujjain, the Gupta capital, supposed to be his home. He had mentioned Vidiśā shortly before, whose king is the hero of "Mālavikā". And the poet of love lets his lovelorn spirit describe all the lovely women everywhere greeting the first rain-cloud with love and joy, for it brings shadow and rain. Yes, he even describes the river near the city as a woman who languishes in longing for the far-off rain and now blooms again with the cloud's coming, for the cloud understands the magic of love. Here the spirit wished to point to his own desire—that his beloved should also receive strength from the cloud.

> The cloud is to fly on northward, over the Kuru plain, where the hero of the epic of Mahābhārata fought, (the plain lies to the west of Delhi between

the valleys of the Indus and the Ganges), to the Himalayas, where it may quench a forest fire.

It shall fly over the pass which the Indians called the "Goose Hole", over which the migratory birds flew in spring, northwards to the high plateau of Tibet, and the dwellers in the tropical plains followed their flight to the cool north with something approaching envy. Today many pilgrims pass along this way to the holy places on the Mānasarovar Lake and around Kailāsa, a snow-capped peak of the trans-Himalayas[51], but whether this custom existed in Kālidāsa's time is not evident from his poem. However, lonely wandering beggars and pilgrims were often compared with geese and migrating birds.

> The cloud was also to pass over Kailāsa, which the poet calls the mirror of the celestial nymphs, where Śiva and his wife dwell.
> Heavenly maidens will there make of you a shower-bath, and if they do not let you free when you are emptied of water, then you shall awe them a little with loud growls of thunder. You will then come to the lake of Manasa and to the city of Alakā.

This, according to some handwritten and printed versions, brings the first section of the poem to an end and indicates the cloud's path. The second part describes the city, the house of the spirit and of the spirit's beloved wife, and his message to her.

> There are wonderful palaces built of precious stones, and on their roofs the spirits make love to their wives.
>
> Our dwelling there is northward of the house of Kubera, and you will recognise it from afar by its arched gate, a huge tree, a pool with steps leading down to it and a small pleasure rock garden.

Thus far Kālidāsa describes a house comparable to the luxurious abode of an important person as described in the Book of Love.

> To enter swiftly you must reduce yourself to the size of an elephant whelp and come to rest upon the peak of the pleasure garden. Your glance, a twinkle of lightning, will fall within the house like the gentle lustre from a line of fireflies. Then you will see my beloved wife.

How can the mighty monsoon rain-cloud reach the beloved and speak to her? How can it enter her room? It must remain outside, make itself small and only flash gently. The lightning is its glance, for the Hindu thought that a glance from the eye was as a fine ray of fire, which—in cats for instance—is visible in the dark[52]. The poet conjures up a gay image when he lets the cloud shrink to the size of an elephant whelp—here again with the intention of counteracting pathos, especially at this point where he begins his description of the sorrowing wife.

> There she sits, her face pillowed in her hand, her eyes swollen from much weeping. In the heat of many sighs her under-lip has lost its colour. Perhaps you shall see her sacrificing, or my likeness painting, or asking a bird in its

> cage whether it remembers me, his master. Tears fall on the strings of her lute; she wipes them away, but forgets her song, although she herself had composed it. At night she tosses sleepless on her couch.
>
> I know that her heart is full of love for me, so I know how she suffers at our first separation. I am no braggart, brother, and all that I have uttered will soon be manifest to you.

This is one of the especially delicate points of the poem. The lovesick spirit has painted for the cloud a moving picture of his bevoled—how she suffers, how deeply she loves him. It is characteristic of Kālidāsa's heroes that they demand very strong and distinct declarations of love from their ladies, declarations made in their absence to which they love to listen; this will be seen in "Śakuntalā", "Urvaśī" and in "Mālavikā". These passionate men long for signs of passion from their loved ones, which they need to reassure themselves.

The lover has described his wife's love to himself and to the cloud, and now counters the unvoiced objection: How can you then describe so positively the lovelorn state of the far-away beloved? Are you then so sure of her love? Is it not possible that she loves another? The love-sick spirit, so impassioned as to send a message through an inanimate cloud, now develops a logical argument and enumerates in detail the various means of recognition. He reaches his conclusions about the present state of his beloved from his certain knowledge of her earlier love, and he assures the cloud that it will soon be able to perceive with its own eyes the correctness of these conclusions. Perception and conclusion are the two basic means of cognition in old Indian logic.

The sorrowing lover claims to see clearly and not to be deluded. The poet, however, does not actually bring proof of this in the poem, for the cloud does not reach Alakā, and the reader has the choice of smiling with the poet over the despairing spirit's fanciful notion, or of hoping with him. This passage stressing logic is what confuses; if it were not there such thoughts would not occur to the reader at all. The sensation is also produced that the spirit himself wishes to argue away logically the doubts which occur to him too. The cloud has in any case expressed no such doubts. Mallinātha, the famous commentator, placed no special emphasis on this verse, so it is difficult today to determine what the old poet really meant to convey. This much is certain, however, that at this point in the love poem Kālidāsa for the third time dropped something odd—disillusionment, perhaps something witty and at the same time bitter—into the touching love mood which he had created.

> If she should sleep and dream of me, let her rest. But then raise her with your cool breath. And if she gazes astonished at the window where you appear, hold back your flash and speak to her in your thunder tones.

Speak—and you can but speak in thunder tones—but thunder without lightning, for your lightning would prevent her seeing your face as you speak, adds the learned commentator.

> So shall you speak to her as my messenger and she will look to you with face upturned and a yearning sigh, and hear your message as Sītā heard the message which Hanumān brought her from Rāma.

Here the spirit recalls Sītā's loyalty as she lay in captivity in Lankā, where she was comforted by a message from Rāma brought to her by the monkey Hanumān.

> Tell her how I suffer, how sear I have grown, how I long for her, how I have painted her likeness with crimson chalks upon the crag, and how I then wished to fashion myself fallen at her feet, but my sight was blurred with ever-welling tears. Ah! cruel fate forbids that we should mingle even here. Do you remember how once in sleep you clung to my breast and awoke softly weeping, and as I asked you again and again why you wept, you smiled at last and said: I dreamed that you loved another. Who knows this but our two selves? Be assured, then, that the cloud's message really comes from your beloved. Heed not the talk of crowds ("he is long dead") and trust me to come soon again.
>
> When you have thus comforted her, O Cloud, come quickly back on the wings of the wind, bring me a token from her and news that she is well. Then go where you will, your beauty made more beautiful by the rainy season, and may you not miss your beloved the lightning for the twinkling of an eye.

It is not clear how Kālidāsa thought the cloud would return. Through the whole poem the idea prevails of the monsoon driving the rain clouds northward, as it does from about June to September. A winter monsoon, on the other hand, blows in January and February from North West India down the Ganges valley —in about an East-South-East direction[53]. But the skies are then almost cloudless. Otherwise one might suppose that Kālidāsa reckoned with the return of the cloud messenger in January, seven or eight months after his departure in June. Such a lengthy journey is not so improbable, considering the enormous distances and the usual speed of travel in old India.

What journeys could an old Indian poet have in mind? It is not certain whether pilgrims at that time journeyed to Kailāsa in summer as they do today. But there were without doubt holy beggars of all Indian religious persuasions—Brahman, Buddhist, Jinnist and so on—who had to be constantly on the move and might only pause in a village or monastery during the rainy season. But other men and women who did not belong to religious orders often wandered to the holy places, from temple to temple over long distances.

The Mahābhārata epic tells of such pious pilgrimages, for instance that of Baladeva, and in the Purānas one sometimes finds mention of the routes of pilgrims with their holy places and local legends. Kālidāsa also knew from the epic poem of columns of soldiers or victorious marches of single heroes or groups of heroes which sometimes took them all over India. The broad, sweeping narrative of the hero Arjuna tells of his journey from the central Ganges valley near Delhi first to the north and east and then to the south-east coast and to the west and north-west of India, during which he conquered kings and encountered adventures with beautiful women of human and super-human nature, and so forth before he finally returned home[54]. In the epic of Rāmāyana, however, the old plot of "victories of the four quarters" is utilised by Rāma in his search for Sītā after her abduction. The monkeys of the Deccan volunteer their help and their king divides them into four groups, each of which is to conduct its search in one of the four quarters of the globe. The epic poet positively shines in geographical knowledge in these chapters[55].

But the clever, swift monkey Hanumān, who was said to be a son of the wind god, is sent out to the south. It was he who finally discovered Sītā in Lankā, which the Hindus assume to be Ceylon. He approached her cautiously so as not to frighten her, and gave her Ramā's ring as a guarantee of his good faith. Sītā thought Hanumān was none other than the demon Rāvana, who had abducted her and who now had her in his power, come to her in the guise of a monkey to have his will of her. Convinced by the sight of Rāma's ring, she is comforted and believes that Rāma will set her free. At Hanumān's request she tells him of something which happened to her and Rāma about which none other can know. After many adventures, Hanumān succeeds in reaching Rāma and tells him Sītā's story as proof that he has really met and spoken with her. Rāma in turn is comforted by the knowledge that she lives and waits faithfully for him.

There is no doubt that Kālidāsa knew this epic of Rāmāyana, for he has retold the whole story in his "Line of Raghu".[56] There, however, he has dismissed the whole monkey episode very briefly[57], omitting Sītā's story, for instance. But the scene of the beloved's awakening in "The Cloud Messenger" is strongly reminiscent of this episode.

It should also be mentioned that Rāma played only a small role beside the monkey king in sending the monkeys out on their search. The monkey king arranged everything, and only when Hanumān was sent out to the south did Rāma, thinking him suitable for the task, give him his ring so that Sītā should know whence the monkey came and not be alarmed[58]. Rāma does not say a word here about the sufferings of his abducted wife, nor does he give the monkey any message. Previously too, as Rāma asked the monkey king to help him and the king called his mighty army of monkeys together, Rāma gave no order and asked only that they should find out if Sītā still lived and if so, where she might be found[59].

So when Kālidāsa emphasises in "The Cloud Messenger" how the spirit's wife would gaze up at the cloud with sighs as Sītā gazed at the monkey, when he thus reminds his readers of the famous old epic, one can sense a certain reproach against Rāma's coldness. Rāma might also, if he had been a loving husband, have sent a tender message of comfort through the monkey.

In his re-telling of the epic in "The Line of Raghu" Kālidāsa changed nothing of this scene, but in another part, as will be seen later, he expressly criticises the epic Rāma in a similar sense. This is what gives us the right to read into

"The Cloud Messenger" too a fine, barely perceptible criticism of the hero Rāma, and this insight permits us the better to appreciate this lyric poem. The conclusion may also be permissible that Kālidāsa, because he had already expressed criticism of the Rāma epic in the poem, felt himself justified in making no alteration in the corresponding passages of "The Line of Raghu". On the other hand, if it should be established that "The Line of Raghu" was written before "The Cloud Messenger", it would be fair to assume that Kālidāsa only later came to the conclusion that a criticism was called for.

In the epic Rāmāyana we are told how Rāma, after his victory in Lankā, returned with Sītā through the air in his heavenly chariot Pushpaka to his capital, Ayodhyā, north of the Ganges[60]. As they fly through the heavens he shows her the places through which he had wandered southwards. Kālidāsa retains this episode in a whole song in "The Line of Raghu"[61], even more detailed than in the original epic. So it seems that Kālidāsa loved this glorious epic song and that it had inspired him when he wrote his "Cloud Messenger".

One should also bear in mind that other legendary messengers of love were certainly known to Kālidāsa from earlier literature. We need only mention the story of Prince Nala and Princess Damayantī, which is told in detail in the Mahābhārata epic. They love each other, for they have heard only good and fine things of each other, although they have never met. One day Nala captures a wild goose in the woods. She begs him to spare her life and promises to fly to Damayantī and to praise him to her as a worthy husband. Nala releases her and she flies to the princess, returning to the prince with a message of love from her[62].

Thus Kālidāsa could draw inspiration from old folk poetry. But what he took from this source he only retold very briefly in his outer story. The introduction is masterly in its brevity. For him the three main sections were more important: 1. the description of the cloud's journey, 2. the moving description of the two lovers—first the wife in broader strokes, then the husband more briefly—and 3. the message itself, which actually begins in the form of a letter containing the usual question as to the lady's health. Oral love messages or love letters played a big role in polite society of that time.

The poem then concludes with a strophe containing a suitable blessing of the cloud by the grateful spirit—may the cloud never be separated fromhis beloved, the lightning, as the spirit is separated from his beloved. The separation of lovers is the theme of this lyrical idyllic poem, as of Kālidāsa's other great works.

Kālidāsa is the old Indian poet of love. But in the separation of the lovers love becomes a poetical reproach telling of the pain of separation and then of the rapture of reunion. In "The Cloud Messenger" a real reason for the separation is not given. The spirit has committed some negligence towards his master Kubera and is banned for one year. He himself does not care to speak of his crime to the cloud, but speaks rather of a "fateful" banishment[63], with a fatalism which, as the old Indian Book of State of Kauṭalya teaches, is only the excuse of the weak and unsuccessful. In his other works Kālidāsa laid more emphasis on the exact reasons for separation, but in "The Cloud Messenger" his interest lay only in a lyrical description of the lovers.

Listeners can have no doubt that the separation will come to a happy end. Kubera's curse was from the start limited to one year, and in all his grief the spirit is hopeful. This optimism, which appears through all Kālidāsa's tales of separated lovers, points the contrast between the Śivaitic poet and the pessimistic outlook of the Buddhist and other ascetic religions, which were in the habit of presenting separated lovers as the pattern of alleged customary human misery. There were also ascetic tendencies in Śivaism, but Kālidāsa, for all his piety, sang of a happy enjoyment of life. Even in his picture of the highest of the gods, Śiva, he portrayed a man advancing from ascetic to lover (see below—"Birth of the War God").

5. *Birth of the War God*

Only the first part of this epic poem[64], which consists of eight songs, has come down to us. The birth of the War God himself and his victory over the demons is not contained in this part, which only tells of the growing love of his parents, the god Śiva and the goddess Pārvatī. A later poet composed a second part. Whether Kālidāsa himself left the poem unfinished or whether his second part was lost is not yet clear. But even as a fragment this poem is worthy of high admiration.

It deals with a legend of Śiva to understand which, however, it is necessary to refer to another legend. Śiva once married Umā or Satī, daughter of Daksha. Daksha organised a great sacrificial feast, but did not invite his son-in-law Śiva to it, because he was poor, miserable, covered with the ashes of corpses and so on. Umā was so wounded by this omission that she sought death in the flames. This is the origin of the Hindu name of "satī", a true wife, for a wife who voluntarily follows her husband to death on the funeral pyre. But Śiva was so furious at the loss of his beloved wife that he destroyed Daksha's sacrifice. He sent his followers, including the terrible Vīrabhadra, to wipe out Daksha and his guests. Śiva had actually not been a god of the Vedic people and priests, but of the pre-Vedic society of the third millennium B.C. in the Punjab. In the course of various religious quarrels he gained his place in the Brahman pantheon only later[65].

Satī was born again as Pārvāti, daughter of the mountain, of the Himalaya, who was regarded as a god. She was to be wed to Śiva again and to be mother of the god of war. The Śivaitic and Vishnuitic Brahmans thought of world history as a million-year-long war of the gods against the demons, the Asuras. Ever-renewed generations of demons rise up as usurpers and conquer power over the heavens and earth. They tyrannise over men as cruel despots, and over gods and spirits of many realms. According to the Vishnu creed, Vishnu must appear again and again in various human forms to help the good to victory; or according to the followers of Śiva, Śiva or his son must appear, for Śiva himself is no warrior. Just as Virabhadra wrought vengeance on Daksha and his guests, so was Śiva's son, Kumāra God of War, to fight against and conquer the demon Tāraka.

Every Hindu knew so much of Śiva mythology, and Kālidāsa could assume this. He began his poem with the birth of Pārvāti.

> One day Nārada, heavenly wise man and lute-player of whom many legends are told, saw the virgin Pārvāti at her father's side as he flew through the air. He pointed to her as the only future wife for Śiva. The mountain god thereupon gave up the search for another suitor, although his daughter was already of marriageable age. On the other hand he could not hand her over to the god, since Śiva had not asked for her.

According to Hindu belief the prophecy of a heavenly being like Nārada must come true, for he cannot tell a falsehood. A Hindu maiden's father is traditionally responsible for her betrothal at a very early age—ten or twelve years. But Himalaya cannot now seek another suitor or address himself direct to Śiva, the high god. This difficult situation was decisive for Pārvatī and her destiny.

> Śiva the widow would hear nothing of a new wife and went to do penance as a yogi on the slopes of the Himalaya. The mountain god gave him his daughter as a servant. She picked flowers for his altar, fetched water for his ablutions and so on, and the god accepted her services despite his asceticism.

The Mahābhārata tells of a king who allowed his daughter to serve the fire god Agni at his hearth and sacrificial fire, and how she became pregnant by him[66]. Our poet may have had such scenes in mind as he wrote. Others tell how a father, somewhat as a debtor who cannot repay, gives his daughter instead—in other words sells her as a slave. He who takes her, however, regards her as a wife, for the wife's position differed little from that of a slave in old Indian slave society. In other old Indian tales there are more or less cheerful accounts of how beautiful maidens led hermits astray, for instance, how a jolly harlot reminds a hermit that he can very well amuse himself a little with her, for he can easily and quickly atone for his sin later through severe penance[67].

The poet does not explain or even hint at what the mountain god Himalaya had in mind in acting thus. Presumably he hoped to succeed in awakening his ascetic son-in-law out of his hatred of women, and to see his fate and that of his daughter fulfilled without dwelling too closely on the details of how this was to happen. He presented his daughter, his dearest possession, to his guest on the mountain side to use as his slave, and he could pronounce this to be his duty.

> At that time Brahmā the all-seeing, promised the gods a son of Śiva and Pārvatī who would save the world from the demon Tāraka, and Indra, king of heaven, set out to assist fate. He enlisted the god of love, who was eager to help, to pierce Śiva's heart with an arrow. Kāma, god of love, together with his wife Rati and the tricky god of spring, journeyed to the Himalayas, where the hermits could scarcely control their rising desires and animals were inflamed with passion and so on. Only with Śiva did the arts of the god of love fail. Then came Pārvatī, around whose red, blossom-like lips the bees hummed madly, and at this moment Śiva ceased his yoga exercises.

Kālidāsa avoids saying openly that Śiva was aroused out of his meditations by the beautiful maiden; a true yogi does not permit himself to be influenced by women. But he did not deny any connection between the maiden's coming and the god's awakening—and for a very good reason, for he had now come to the difficult theme, for a pious person, of the power of love and of yoga, which he wished to decide in favour of love without venturing to present Śiva simply as having been seduced. Śiva must not be culpable, and he must not lose his yoga power through the maiden. Kālidāsa did not wish to deny that yoga possessed a positive magical and superhuman force. This was only denied by materialists, who cynically declared that yoga was extremely transitory, for every hermit would be driven from time to time by mere hunger to renounce his asceticism[68]. Kālidāsa did not wish to go so far, but as a warm-hearted man, he did wish to show that hermits can also be moved by love. He simply did not want to say this directly, but tried to describe minutely the relations of the godly-human couple without attaching blame to either as seduced or seducer. Neither did he wish to present the pre-destined birth of the war god as the excuse for the hermit's love, as would have sufficed for a pious person. Kālidāsa was a poet, and he chose this myth because through it he could demonstrate his truly great poetic gifts, and every reader will agree that he has succeeded in a masterly way—although up to now no poet has translated these fine scenes of the Indian classical poet for us into equally good German; and for a philologist to translate his verse in prose is equally hopeless.

> Enough, the god felt a tremor but controlled himself immediately, glimpsed the god of love with his raised bow and arrow and, full of wrath, burnt him to ashes with a flash of fire from his third eye, which he carried in his forehead.

Here the hermit Śiva burns with love and wrath. His love is young, but his wrath is full-grown and deadly. But is he still ascetic in this state? A Buddhist ascetic should be silent, humble and gentle. But there were others too, like the beggars who, when they did not receive alms from the housewife, immediately had a cruel curse ready. These were a great trial, especially for poor women, and there were good grounds for the saying "The housewife sets food on the fire to cook even if she knows that hermits will come and beg it from her"[69]. "We eat fish even though it has bones." Materialists delighted in quoting such sayings against the hermits, as if to say that our life is miserable, but also well worth loving and living. But from such ugly, importunate beggars the people had built up the mythological type of hermit like Durvāsas who appears in sinister fashion in the epics and also in Kālidāsa's "Śakuntalā". Here Śiva appears as an ill-tempered saint of this type, who kills at once in his wrath.

On the other hand, love and rage are two passions which a cultured Hindu should keep under control. But at the same time practical life was not always conducive to this moral teaching, especially in the despotism of old slave and feudal society. In Kauṭalya's Book of State such self-control is treated as fundamental. But mention is also made there of a state law teacher Bhāradvāja who not only permits love and wrath to despots, but even praises them as manly virtues[70]. In the case of Śiva, the highest god, who is presented as a cosmic despot upon whose unpredictable moods all events in nature and society are supposed to depend, the two sides—superhuman love passion and deadly wrath—are again and again clearly indicated. His self-control is also superhuman, yogi-like. These two sides—the creative and the destructive—are characteristic of this god, who is at the same time the typical representative of Hinduism—that religion which Karl Marx called the religion of the monk and of the hetaera[71]. But all three aspects of the god—steadfast asceticism and retreat from the things of this world, deadly wrath and flaming passion—are presented with great artistry by Kālidāsa in this poem. Śiva's wrath, however, appears only once here.

> Kālidāsa followed this scene of horror with Rati's mourning, a dirge to the god of love

such as had been customary for thousands of years in the old Orient, in the dirges to Adonis, god of spring, to Tammuz and so on. In Indian epic poetry, according to actual custom, there is the mourning song of Tārā for her defeated husband, the monkey king Vālin, in the Rāmāyana[72] and in the Mahābhārata epic there is the dirge of the widows on the battlefield of Kurukshetra led by the old widow Gāndhārī[73]. The corresponding passage, in reversed form, is to be found in Kālidāsa's "Line of Raghu" in the dirge of King Aja for his beloved dead Indumatī.

> Śiva, the goddess Rati is assured, will bring the god of love back to life when he is married to Pārvatī, and this hope prevents her following her husband into death,

but at the same time draws the reader's attention to the inevitability of Śiva's and Pārvatī's fate.

> Śiva then disappeared, to avoid proximity with the girl.

The great god and ascetic was clearly himself aware that his heart was no onger immune.

> But Pārvatī, thus abandoned by the husband to whom she was destined by fate, determined to reach him through asceticism and won her father's con-

> sent to this. She did stern penance on Gaurisankar, lighting four fires around her in summer while the sun burned down on her like a fifth fire. In winter she castigated herself in water. She ate only dried-up fallen leaves and finally renounced even this nourishment.

Here Kālidāsa may have had in mind an episode in the Rāmāyana, where Vedavatī, a human princess, did penance in the Himalayas in order to gain Vishnu, whom her father had destined to be her husband. A demon wished to rape her as she sat alone in the wild jungle, but she burnt herself and was reborn as Sītā. who married Rāma—the incarnation of Vishnu[74]. Buddhism and Jinnism both recognised women as nuns, and there are also occasional women beggars in Brahmanism. There is such a woman in Kālidāsa's "Mālavikā" and in the Mahābhārata the nun Sulabhā discusses philosophical and other questions with king Janaka. For us it is hard to imagine what such an ascetic and strong-willed virgin could mean to the poet and his listeners. Kālidāsa here presents the woman as at least the equal of the man. Both gods give themselves up to yoga practices—he to ward off all love, she to overcome his resistance—not out of love (the poet makes no mention of love here), but because the god is her fate and she can only belong to him, so that she must at all costs be his.

Her penance will be successful—the hearer knows this—but how? Does she win him through the magic power of yoga, as old Indian religion again and again has it? Or through the compulsion of fate or through the strength of love? Does the god permit himself to be moved by the girl's steadfastness and or is he conquered by the power of the god of love, whom he killed in vain? The poet provides no answer to these questions. He obviously wished to leave the question open and on no account to state expressly that the all-powerful, ascetic, highest god Śiva had succumbed to love like a human being and had given up his ascetic practices. A fallen yogi, a renegade ascetic, would according to Indian law be a slave of the king. Whoever became a hermit retired from his own caste and could not re-enter it, so that he stood alone, no longer protected by his caste, and was at the mercy of the despot's arbitrary will. Such unlucky persons were often made use of as spies[75], since they moved about a great deal, heard much and were reckoned holy. But Kālidāsa does not again show Śiva as yogi in this fragment. He leaves things deliberately vague.

> One day a youthful Brahman pupil approached the penitent and praised her diligence, owning that he knew she was doing penance on account of a man, and criticised her (all in the form of delicately pointed questions) for courting the man and the man for failing to court her. She remained shyly silent and a girl friend answered for her. The youth advised her to break away from Śiva, since he was hideously ugly, poor and unworthy of her. But Pārvatī now opened her lips proudly and refused to hear such slanderings of the god from one who did not know him. She wanted to run away, but the youth—who was Śiva himself—seized her laughingly in his strong arms and declared himself to be her slave, bought by her penance.

To convince himself of her love and constancy, the god had approached her in the guise of a youthful tempter—but not as an eavesdropper, as Dushyanta listened to his Śakuntalā. Pārvatī remains firm, but only through flight, outwardly similar but inwardly with quite different feelings from those which had prompted Śiva to flee from her earlier. Pārvatī is not moved by the handsome youth, but she feels that such a conversation with anyone who attacks her future husband is impermissible. The god is won over, he seizes her in his arms as she flees,

> but Pārvatī lets her friend tell him that only her father can give her to him.

The chaste young girl does not permit herself to be taken, but insists on traditional courtship and marriage. The poet does not describe how she escapes from the arms of the god, but he lets her act quite differently from Śakuntalā, who quickly surrenders to her lover. Even Śiva, passionate lover and avenging god, does not wish or try to seduce Pārvatī.

> Śiva sends the "seven wise men" of old mythology with Arundhatī, the wife of the first of them, to the mountain god Himalaya. He places special value on the presence of a woman. It is not right to place the man over the wife and her actions are decisive.

Kālidāsa, the great lover, here places the woman on a basically equal status with the man—contrary to the rigid patriarchal old Indian family customs. Here he expresses an idea which runs through the whole poem.

> The god does not speak of his love, but only of his fateful cosmic task, to the matchmakers. He never acts for his own personal advantage.

Up to this point there was no indication that Śiva even knew about this task. Kālidāsa certainly invests him with the attribute of omniscience, in accordance with the Hindu religion, but except for this one passage he lets him behave purely as a man—as a widower and ascetic slowly falling in love. Such a genuinely human development would be impossible to picture if one attributed all happenings to the power of an impersonal fate.

> The courtship proceeds along perfectly formal aristocratic lines. The maiden stands with downcast eyes at her father's side and counts the petals of a lotus blossom. The father looks at his wife, for in matters connected with their daughters women have the final decision. In the meantime the god does not know how to contain himself. When even Śiva is overcome by his emotions, how can an ordinary mortal escape them,
>
> adds the poet and indicates here one of the basic intentions of his great poem.
>
> The wedding takes place with all ritual. The mountain god is ashamed that the great Śiva (as befits a son-in-law) bows before him, and does not notice that he himself at the same time bows to Śiva in return (which does not at all conform to the custom concerning fathers-in-law).

Thus the poet brings a cheerful note of light irony into the pompous picture of a kingly and godly wedding. As court poet he may well have observed similar signs of human weakness amongst highly-placed personages at such ceremonies, and now he brings a smile to his hearer's lips.

> During the solemn and decisive action of clasping hands, the god's hands perspire and the hairs on the bride's body rise up.

According to the Book of Love this should be reversed, and in "The Line of Raghu" the poet has pictured this "correctly", but his commentator excuses him here with the remark that the law of love does not represent an unchangeable law of human behaviour.

> After the marriage Śiva brings the god of love back to life. The gods beg him to do this and a timely request always meets with heartfelt sympathy.

Here Kālidāsa flatters and at the same time admonishes kings. The god of love can now take up his office again, for the god was now eager to fall victim to his love arrow.

> At first Pārvatī remains modestly silent in the nuptial chamber and does not speak, even to her friends; only Śiva's spirits, cobolds, drew a secret smile from her with their grimaces.

The first three days and nights, according to tradition, the young pair, who should actually not have met at all before the wedding, must get accustomed to each other, and the man must bring the young wife to forget her shame, with laughter, liquor, flattery and the help of her women friends, as the Book of Love teaches.

> The eighth and last song of the fragment available to us deals with Śiva's efforts in the following days, slowly and cautiously, according to the Book of Love, to teach his young wife to overcome her shyness. At first she is patient with his tender embraces, which the poet even calls "pitying", and he slowly wins her to return his love. Pārvatī became the pupil of the great god in the art of love.

It would need a poet as great as Kālidāsa to reproduce his words for the German reader.

After a month, Śiva rode with Pārvatī on his bull Nandin through the mountain regions of the north to the wonderful places sacred to the god. One evening he, like every family father, offered up the customary evening prayers, leaving his wife alone the while, and she pouted. But then he described the beauties of the evening and the rising moon to her, gave her an intoxicating draft[76], and aroused in her a passion equal to his own. So passed a hundred seasons—25 human years—like a single night of love, and his love was not quenched.

This is the end of the poem for us, because—as has been suggested—of the disapproval of pious persons of the description of the godly pair's worldly love. But if this had actually been the case, the sensual last song would surely have been suppressed. It is interesting that the "Line of Raghu" also breaks off equally unexpectedly.

It is very regrettable that there is no description of the child's birth, for Kālidāsa was not only the poet of lovers but also of the love of children, as we see in his "Śakuntalā" and "Urvaśī"; and the drama of "Mālavikā" ends with the heroic deeds of the king's son. Hindu mythology taught that Pārvatī actually bore no son. This wonder child, the god of war, seed of the god brought to fruition by the goddess, would have been too powerful for the earth. Thus Śiva had to bear fruit through other mothers. We should much like to know how a poet like Kālidāsa would have dealt with this curious myth.

As the poem has come down to us it is a high song of the love of this godly pair which won ascendance over the ascetic tradition. Pictures of the third millennium B.C. already show hermits, but also temple dancers in lascivious poses, for in the primitive form of Śivaism of that time there were already signs of the two main contradictory aspects of this religion of the monk and the hetaera. In the Rgveda, the oldest Indian evidence of the Vedic tribes dating from about 1000 B.C., a poem has come down to us in which Lopāmudrā complains to her husband Agastya that she is tired of his year-long asceticism. Agastya then allows her, very willingly, to seduce him[77]. Thus the Vedic tribes were acquainted with these problems very soon after their appearance in India, and they dealt with them with naive sensuality. So Kālidāsa could look back upon thousands of years of tradition in these matters, and his work shows the delicacy and depth which were the fruits of long effort.

It is usually said that the thought or the poetic motif of human development has remained foreign to old Indian literature. And it is true that an epic hero like Rāma does not develop; he has the same moral character from the beginning. To be sure, Indian biography—of the Buddha for example—contains the motif of conversion, of a mortal prince being converted and giving up the riches of this life. But Kālidāsa was so great a poet that he achieved the presentation of human development in working out the opposite problem of the victory of love over asceticism.

Śiva was at first widower and woman-hater. He is first moved by his beautiful servant Pārvatī, flees from her when he almost feels the threatening arrow of the god of love, is attracted and then won by her constancy. He wants to take her in his arms, and is then led on by her to become the impatient lover and formal wooer. In the bridal chamber he develops all the gifts of the lover to win his bride slowly and tenderly and to awaken her burning passion while himself filled with unsated desire. He, the erstwhile hermit, becomes the loving husband—a monogamous husband. In those times of the polygamous old Indian princes, Śiva shares this trait with the ideal hero, Rāma, so that the Indian poets Kālidāsa and Vālmiki, poet of the Rāmāyana, regarded and described monogamous marriage as the highest form of love.

Beside Śiva stands Pārvatī, the maiden just reaching maturity, daughter of the glacier-rich mountain god, destined by fate and by her father's wish to be Śiva's bride, but not desired by him. She serves him as a slave and faithful wife should, but he flees from her as she approaches him. Her pride deeply wounded, deprived of what fate had destined to be hers, but refusing to renounce her right to her husband, she fights to win him. She does penance to win him by magic means. A youth tempts her, but she remains constant to the man who spurns her, and thus wins his love. She is still the young girl destined by fate to be betrothed to the god, and she demands that her lover observe the proper ritual ceremonies. She refers the importunate wooer to her father as tradition demands. After the ritual wedding she retains her modesty for the prescribed length of time and only slowly allows herself to be inflamed by her young husband until at last she returns his love in earnest. We unfortunately learn nothing of her development towards motherhood. But even this development from slavish, conventionally innocent maiden to bride and warmly loving and sometimes capricious, then passionate wife, is a masterpiece which could only have been achieved by a very great Indian poet.

One may call this poem the glorious song of the Indian bride. In old Indian society the bride occupied a different position from her European counterpart. The pair should in fact not have seen each other before the ritual wedding. The father finds what seems to him a suitable husband for his daughter. Love marriage was actually only permissible amongst persons of noble birth. The buying of brides was apparently widespread. So that the bride in old India did not yet know love. The virtues attributed to her were obedience to her father and the prospect of her slavish obedience to the man chosen for her. It was not for her to seek a husband to suit herself and to win his love, as the Brahman pupil had indicated in the case of Pārvatī. She had only to learn to respond to her husband's love. This is the reason why men were so eager to obtain signs of their wives' love, as can be seen in "The Cloud Messenger", in "Śakuntalā" and so on. But still, the Indians must have found in Pārvatī something analogous to what Europeans feel in the poetic description of a bride who is worthy of love when she approaches and responds to her husband, and is shy and loving, tender and constant.

But Śiva and Pārvatī are a godly pair. Only gods appear in this poem and their world is a heavenly region in the faraway Himalayas. The poet has filled this heavenly world with warm human life. He instilled human love into the world of the highest gods of the Hindu pantheon and thus advanced far beyond the usual Indian level to a truly human development of the two main characters. Only a genius could have created such a poem, with its innately living, anti-ascetic and deeply human content, presenting what is typical of man in Indian form.

The myth Kālidāsa found in old epic tradition, but nowhere did he find this love theme. Where it is told in similar style in later Purānas, as in the Brahmapurāṇa, the Matsyapurāṇa and the Kathāsaritsāgara, the narrators have certainly been influenced by Kālidāsa's classic poem. The mythical, cosmic demon-god struggle was for Kālidāsa unimportant, but for the old mythologists it was the love of Śiva and Pārvatī which was of minor importance. Kālidāsa had to be very free in his use of tradition, and he could be free because he was a genuine poet.

6. The Line of Raghu

"The Line of Raghu"[78], similar in form but in content absolutely different, is desclared by many Indians to be Kālidāsa's greatest work. Here love only occasionally plays a part, and then a curious one. The subject-matter is purānic-epic. It deals literally with the line, but primarily with the descendants of Raghu, an old mythical king of the city of Ayodhyā in the northern Ganges valley. The famous descendant of this dynasty, the so-called sun family[79], famous in epics and in the Puraṇas, was Rāma, hero of the Rāmāyana and the god Vishnu in human form. It is thus a Vaishnava subject elaborated by a Śaiva poet, and this is important for forming an opinion on the work. Śiva does not appear in the poem, which deals with 28 or 29 kings of Ayodhyā.

In describing Raghu's life from birth to death, the poet begins with Raghu's father Dilīpa, so that including him there are descriptions of 29 kings. Rāma is the fifth of these. What is told of him and of his father Daśaratha is taken from the epic poem Rāmāyana and is familiar to every Hindu. The names of the other kings were embedded firmly, if not in detail, in the epic and purānic traditions. No final decision has yet been reached as to what sources Kālidāsa used for these.

But in the old texts, as far as we can still read them, little more than the names of most of these 29 kings remains, so that it seems that Kālidāsa must have invented what he tells of them. The reason why Kālidāsa chose this subject, with its numberless kings, seems to be that he wished to present a sort of mirror of princes (through an extensive use of material from the Book of State) in which their lives from conception and birth to old age and death are dealt with, but in very different ways, so that one may well speak of a gallery of portraits of a whole series of princes of the most varied character.

Thus we have here a very remarkable piece of old Indian literature which needs to be analysed with the greatest care. It is doubtful whether it has come down to us in complete form, and it has a curious ending, so that many people assume that its true conclusion has been lost. But no Indian poet has attempted to complete it.

Of the 29 kings of the dynasty, 20 are very briefly dealt with in a single one of the 19 songs; the others are dealt with very fully. Let us consider them briefly in order.

> 1. King Dilīpa rode with his wife in his coach to the hermit dwelling of the Brahman Vasishṭha, famous in mythology, who is known from the Rāmāyana as the spiritual adviser of many generations of this dynasty. The king was childless and wished to ask help of the Brahman.

The drama of Śakuntalā also begins with a royal journey to a forest hermitage, and the description of nature in both works is romantic, typical of the love of nature of the town dweller and courtier of Gupta times.

> The all-wise Brahman explained the reason for his childlessness, which lay in the fact that Dilīpa, on a visit to Indra, king of the gods, in heaven, had once remembered that his wife had just purified herself and would be awaiting him, so he had returned home hastily without waiting to greet the sacred cow Surabhi. Surabhi had thereupon cursed him with childlessness until he should have won the favour of her daughter through faithful service as a cow-herd.

The king had thus stood between two duties—either to hasten to his wife or to pay homage to the sacred cow; so that he was, so to speak, innocently guilty. If he did not give his wife the chance to conceive he committed a crime equivalent to murder of an unborn child, according to Brahman moral law. But a curse was laid upon him for his haste—and that the curse of impotence. Śakuntalā and Urvaśī were also cursed on account of their careless behaviour, which resulted from their being in love. The poet has thus more than once touched on this theme.

> The daughter of the sacred cow belonged to the Brahman Vasishṭha, so the king, at the Brahman's order, looked after his cow for twenty-one days as she grazed in the jungle.

The Brahman's other slave herdsmen were his pupils[80]; but kings did not customarily herd cows. At most they would herd horses while preparing them for sacrifice to the ruler of the earth, as for instance the next King, Raghu, or King Agnimitra's son in "Mālavikā". True, one recalls that Kālidāsa is said to have been a cow-herd at one time, but even so, this kingly herdsman must have made a somewhat unusual impression on court and city audiences.

> On the 22nd day a tiger attacked the cow. The king fitted an arrow to his bow, but his arm became stiff. The tiger declared himself to be a servant of Śiva, to whom the god had sent the cow as booty. The king offered him his own flesh instead of that of the cow. Here he was again placed between two duties—his duty as a herdsman and his duty as the obedient servant of Śiva. The tiger advised the king to place his life, his youth and his kingdom before the sacrifice of the cow, but Dilipa remained faithful to his duty as herdsman. The tiger disappeared, and the cow gave him some of her milk for his wife as a magic medicine which would cause him to beget a son. Thus Raghu was conceived.

Buddhists and Brahmans told pious stories of a king Śibi who gave up his own flesh to save a dove from an eagle. Kings were thus praised especially in Mahāyāna Buddhism and in Śivaism as gentlemen prepared to sacrifice themselves. It should be emphasised here that Kālidāsa caused the tiger to express the important and reasonable argument that a king should be the herdsman of his people and not of a cow in the form of an impious temptation. Kālidāsa wished to show Dilīpa as such a faithful believer, so intent on producing a son, that he placed the orders of the Brahman Vasishṭha above reasons of state. And he allowed him to succeed, thus indicating his rightness. In this almost senselessly pious and noble manner did the poet begin his work.

The young Raghu was given the task of watching over the sacrificial horse which his father intended to offer up at his hundredth sacrifice. But the king of the gods, Indra, who wished to be the sole holder of the title "Lord of the Hundred Horse Sacrifices", seized the horse. Despite courageous efforts, Raghu could not win back the horse from the god. Dilīpa renounced all titles and also the honour of being lord of the earth which he would have won by the hundredth horse sacrifice. He retired as a hermit into the jungle.

Dilīpa betrays himself as he hurries to his wife, humbles himself as herdsman to the Brahman, conducts his life in a politically unreasonable way and falls from the lofty aim of ruling the world and of being lord of the hundred horses sacrifice to the depths of renouncing his throne and family life. The wavering character is portrayed in the first of these sketches.

2. Raghu was very different from his father. He fought against Indra until defeated, but he won the god's favour by his bravery. He did not capitulate as his father had done before the more powerful tiger. He fought Indra as the hero Krshna had once done in legend, or as Arjuna had fought Śiva, or Jacob the angel of god in the Old Testament, or Gilgamesh against the great goddess's steer. He launched out as a gallant tilter. Raghu's main deed during his famous reign was his conquest of India in all four directions.

A whole song is dedicated to the rule and victories of Raghu—perhaps in honour of Kālidāsa's Gupta king, and certainly as a sequel to the artistic inscriptions in honour of similar victories of earlier rulers and as a sequel to the tradition of world conquerors, for this ideal of conquest had been held up to every Indian prince for a thousand years[81].

But although in the third century B.C. a king and Buddhist like Aśoka was already vowing to his people that he would fight no more—after a great war with all its horrors—and in the Mahābhārata the terrors of war are so deplored that one can clearly hear the voice of the people of old India crying for peace[82], this song of Kālidāsa's is an unqualified glorification of Raghu who, unprovoked and out of pure lust for power, led his armies into battle. Nor has any sign of condemnation of war been found in Kālidāsa's other works.

The victorious Raghu offered up the sacrifice of the all-victorious and gave over all his possessions to the Brahmans. Then came a Brahman named Kautsa and begged him for a large gift of money which he owed to his teacher. The king, now penniless, did not refuse, but prepared to win the required sum by force from Kubera, god of wealth. But on the eve of his departure for this battle, the god allowed a rain of gold to pour down from heaven to enable the king to make the gift to the Brahman and the Brahman to his teacher.

Raghu intends to attack the god of wealth just as he would attack a neighbouring kingdom—which after all, according to the Book of State, was generally represented as the "natural" enemy. Raghu is here for the third time unhesitatingly prepared to give battle, and it is for us not very convincing when Kālidāsa tells us that the people of Ayodhyā admired both this robber king and the begging

Brahman because they were not demanding for themselves; they did not retain the treasure but gave it all away.

Thus Dilīpa, the weak and self-centred, was succeeded by his war-like son Raghu, after whom the poem is named. The Śaiva Kālidāsa thus opened his work dealing with a Vaishnava dynasty.

> 3. The Brahman who had received gifts prophesied for Raghu a son equal to himself. But this son, Aja, also had an entirely different character. When Raghu was an old man he wished to retire to a hermit life in the jungle, but Aja begged him to remain on the throne.
> The chief deed which the poet recounts of Aja is his marriage to Indumatī, princess of southern Birar., On the way there the Prince had to fight with an elephant in the jungle. Lightly wounded, the elephant revealed itself as an enchanted spirit and gave the princely victor a magic weapon. From amongst the many princes who came to woo her, Indumati chose the handsome Aja, and this choice fills a whole song, the gorgeous wedding the following song, and then follow the fights against the rejected rivals, all of which Aja won won with the aid of his magic weapon.
> The following song is Aja's dirge for the all-too-early death of his Indumatī, who died when a wreath of flowers fell from heaven upon her.

In contrast to his father Raghu, in whose life the poet allows women to play no part, Aja is the great lover, and the poet has portrayed him with loving care. But just as the tiger brought political reasoning to bear against Dilīpa's eagerness to sacrifice himself, so does the poet here utter sensible words through the Brahman Vasishṭha about Aja's preoccupation with his love. Vasishṭha reasons with the king and calls him the "best of self-conquerors"—words which have an ironical tinge in face of Aja's overflowing grief. This is significant. Aja wished to follow the corpse of his beloved into the flames. Such a voluntary death was for the orthodox the duty of widows, but never of widowers. Only in our German legend of the three snake leaves does such a thing occur as an exotic custom.

The dirge of King Aja for his wife is composed in deeply and genuinely moving verse. It is worthy of a place beside Rati's lament for the god of love whom Śiva burnt. It is to the poet's credit that he places the wife so high that even a king weeps bitterly for her and is inconsolable. On the other hand, there is a criticism implicit in it; Aja, son of the warlike Raghu, is weak and lacking in majesty in not thinking of his subjects but of his own grief and in contemplating renouncing his royal state. Thus the generations of dynasties developed in a quite unpredictable way, quite in contrast to the flatteries of court hangers-on (as in the case of Agnimitra)[83] and to royalist ideological teachings to the effect that whole dynasties were heroic and therefore genuinely aristocratic.

On the other hand, Vasishṭha, who had already purified Dilīpa of his sin, was also the wise adviser of his grandson Aja. He represented for the poet and for his audience the continuity of the dynasty and of policy. He spoke here in an ascetic moral sense to the mourning king; a wise man should rejoice when he is freed from his wife, for this chain holds him to common life. And the weakling king accepted this in words, however little he may have been convinced by such stern reasoning. He did not venture to speak of his feelings to the Brahman, but the wise man's hard words had their effect, for the king continued to govern until, eight years later, his son could ascend the throne. He then fasted unto death, thus finally fulfilling his vow to follow his beloved wife. But he had kept his word to Vasishṭha too, although against his will.

The poet has avoided describing his reign, with all its probable weaknesses. He says merely that Aja fulfilled his promise for eight years, seizing occasional opportunities to be with his beloved wife in happy dreams.

4. Aja's successor was Daśaratha. The poet introduces him as one who was free of the royal sins of love of the chase and of young women and so on, but he then describes the king's life as exactly the contrary of this, thus again with fine irony.

> As Daśaratha was once out hunting—leaving the duties of goverment to his ministers—(so strongly was he drawn to the chase, this royal vice!) he shot what he thought was an elephant. Hearing a rustle in the bushes beside a stream and thinking it must be an elephant drinking there, he shot blind and hit a young boy hermit who was drawing a pitcher of water.

Now it was in any case forbidden to shoot elephants in old India—and Kālidāsa says so here[84]—since captured elephants, tamed and trained, are very valuable to kings. Aja had therefore only shot lightly at his elephant; but Daśaratha, who was alleged to be free of passion for the chase, committed a sin against a supposed elephant. Kālidāsa actually took this episode from the Rāmāyana, but he would not have insisted that the king did not love the chase if he had not wished to show him as uncontrolled in this connection.

> The wounded boy's father, a hermit, then placed on Daśaratha the curse that he also would die of grief for his son, and followed his own son voluntarily into death.

This scene is significant for the later story of Rāma. Here the Śaiva poet faithfully followed the old Vishnu epic, but at the same time expressed a delicate criticism of the godly Rāma's father. In the Rāmāyana epic Daśaratha himself relates this episode and accuses himself of lack of control. This has a tragic sound and is not intended as criticism in the sense in which Kālidāsa criticises.

As an old man Daśaratha wished to appoint Rāma his successor. But his youngest, and therefore for the time being his most beloved, wife persuaded him to ban Rāma and appoint her own son Bharata. Daśaratha succumbed to the persuasions of his young, beautiful and ambitious wife, banished Rāma and then died in self-reproach and grief for his son.

Thus despite the praise lavished upon him at the beginning, Daśaratha also fell victim to the vice of loving young women.

5. Rāma, hero of the Rāmāyana, succeeded Daśaratha. Kālidāsa related the whole of the old popular epic, but in a very different way. He dealt in detail with the first book of the epic which tells of Rāma's birth, first heroic deeds and marriage to Sītā, in two whole songs, but with the main part of the epic, books II to VI, quite briefly in a single song.

> He tells of Rāma's banishment, how Rāma retires to the jungle with Sītā, who is whisked away to Lankā by Rāvana, then sought by the monkeys and found there; then how Rāma kills Rāvana in a terrible battle. In one whole song Kālidāsa then describes Rāma's flight home with Sītā in a heavenly chariot, from which he shows her the stages of his wanderings to Lankā.
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> This corresponds to a song in the old epic which may have inspired Kālidāsa in writing his "Cloud Messenger". In a further song Kālidāsa describes Rāma's rule and how he cast out Sītā because there were rumours among the people that she had lived with the demon in Lankā and could not therefore be considered pure. Sītā bears twins, Kuśa and Lava, during her banishment in Vālmīki's hermit dwelling. Vālmīki the Brahman teaches the twins the Rāmāyana, the epic of their father's deeds. The twins recount it at their father's sacrifice of the horse and he recognises them. He sends for Sītā, but she establishes her purity in the eyes of the people by the fulfillment of an oath and then allows herself to be received into the bosom of her mother earth. In the final song Kālidāsa sings of Rāma's death.

The following are only a few of the points in which Kālidāsa's version differs from the old epic:

> While Rāma lingers in the jungle with Sītā, Śūrpanakhā, sister of the demon Rāvana, comes to him and begs for his love. Rāma spurns her and Sītā laughs at her. Offended by this laughter, Śūrpanakhā vows vengeance, hastens to her brother and urges him to carry off Sītā.

Sītā's laughter is not mentioned in Vālmīki's epic, but it is decisive for the whole epic action. Kālidāsa has thus placed the blame for her abduction and for all her other sufferings on Sītā herself. Vālmīki had presented it otherwise; Rāma and his brother Lakshmaṇa make fun of Śūrpanakhā's wooing; she threatens to eat Sītā and Rāma says to Lakshmaṇa: One should on no account ridicule those cruel ones who are not of noble birth. Just see what a threat to Sītā resulted from this[85]:

Rāma's rejection of Śūrpanakhā was necessary and it was impossible to avoid offending her. Vālmīki did not mean to make Rāma appear worthy of blame here, but Kālidāsa certainly intended to show Sītā at fault—Śītā who to the followers of Vishnu represented the model of all wifely virtues and was far above all criticism. She need not have laughed.

But Kālidāsa also criticised Rāma. When Rāma heard that his people took offence at his receiving Sītā at his side again, he decided to banish her. He knew that Sītā had already proved her purity by an ordeal of fire in Lankā, but he did not think of convincing his people by a renewed ordeal or by proof of her former ordeal. He acted rapidly, without even informing Sītā of what was to happen. Lakshmaṇa brought the unsuspecting woman in his chariot to Vālmīki's hermitage and there informed her of Rāma's decision. Rāma is not criticised on this account in the old epic, for he was here simply presented as the model of purity, untouched by human weakness.

Kālidāsa handles this situation differently.

> When Sītā hears that she has been abandoned, she falls unconscious. But the goddess of earth, who according to legend is Sītā's mother, thinks: it cannot be possible that the noble Rāma has cast you off without reason! So she does not at once take the unhappy woman to her bosom as she does in the end. Lakshmaṇa excuses himself to Sītā when she regains consciousness: "I am only Rāma's servant. Forgive the roughness (!) with which I acted—at my brother's command." Sītā begs him to demand of the king whether it is worthy of his dynasty to cast her out after she had been proved pure by the ordeal of fire. And Vālmīki said to her: "Rāma has done great deeds, but I am indignant with him that he has treated you so badly without reason. I am sorry for you". As a wise man he knows that Rāma has been confused by false rumours spread amongst the people.

All these sentences are missing in Vālmīki's epic[86]. Kālidāsa has added them because he was not in agreement with the humanly inhuman attitude of Rāma—the moralist's ideal. He obviously doubted whether Rāma truly loved Sītā and also whether he had acted justly as king and judge. Rāma knew that popular rumours about Sītā's laxity were untrue. He therefore did not serve the ends of justice but of his own pride in raising the purity of his dynasty above all question. He had no reason to behave as he did. He behaved crudely. He was confused, and a king should not become confused, especially an ideal king. Kālidāsa allowed the goddess of earth, the faithful brother Lakshmaṇa, Sītā herself and, as final authority, the Brahman Vālmīki, hermit and poet of the Rāmāyana, to pass stern judgment on Rāma. Only as a Śivaite could he thus criticise this Vaishnava ideal, but even so it needed courage, even courage quite without parallel in Indian literature, to do this.

Kālidāsa pictured Rāma as a hateful, hard-hearted despot, even though this very Rāma was famous in India as the greatest king of the Raghu line. It is hard for us to imagine how his listeners reacted to this criticism of the god-man Rāma, the incarnation of Vishnu. But Kālidāsa deserves high praise for his warm-hearted, courageous and just criticism of Rāma following on his delicate criticisms of Rāma's fore-runners.

But Kālidāsa's judgment of Rāma is at the same time a criticism of Vālmīki, who had created the rigorously moral picture of Rāma in the old epic[87]. And it should also be noted that Kālidāsa was not absolutely fair in his account of the Rāmāyana as a whole. He was not able to do full justice to the great poetic achievement of Vālmīki—which is remarkable and even difficult to understand in Kālidāsa, the poet of human love—for although Vālmīki had presented the Rāma ideal in its entire inhumanity, love does play a big role in his great epic. Vālmīki re-created in a wonderfully human way the aged Daśaratha's love for his aging principal wife after the episode with his younger favourite, which had been unworthy of an old man. He sang with tragic fervour of the hopeless love of the demon Rāvana for Sītā, and he span a wonderful love story around the clever, strong monkey queen Tārā at the monkey king's court[88].

Vālmīki was the poet of love in old Indian slave society, Kālidāsa the poet of love in feudal society[89]. But in this part of the Rāmāyana Kālidāsa shows himself unable to appreciate this great aspect of his gifted predecessor. Was he prevented by his Śivaism from doing so? Or had he not read Vālmīki's epic at all, but only known the life of Rāma as it was handed down in legend? Had he read only a summary of its contents?[90] These questions have not yet been settled, but they do not affect Kālidāsa's criticism of Rāma.

> 6. After Rāma came his son Kuśa. The main story told of him is the legendary way in which he won his wife. There is nothing of this in the Rāmāyana. Once Kuśa lost his armband while bathing; fishermen could not find it in the lake and suggested that a snake demon might be the thief. Kuśa fitted an arrow to his bow to shoot into the water, the demon appeared, gave him back his armband and told him how his little sister Kumudvati had stolen it in childish curiosity. He offered Kuśa the girl as servant. Kuśa took her as his wife and she bore him his son Atithi.

Kuśa, successor of the heroic Rāma, bore more resemblance to Aja. He actually takes up a fighting position on one occasion, but does not have to fight, for he achieves his aim by threats alone. He also wins his wife in this way—a superhuman creature, still a child (where child marriage was customary), who is to serve him. The fate of the wife in old India was not very different from that of a slave, and many a legendary father in old literature gave his daughter to a powerful person in expiation of some crime[92]. This fairy-tale winning of a bride by a weaker son of Rāma may be said to close the line of mythical descendants of Raghu. Atithi and later kings were of a very different character.

> 7. Of Atithi Kālidāsa describes only his ascent to the throne and his reign.

Here all fairy-tale or mythical elements are missing. There is no action. There is no love adventure. The poet here describes the model government of an old Indian despot, based on a thorough knowledge of state law—an historical and not a mythical despot, one may say. There are occasional indications in his accounts of other kings in this poem, too, that Kālidāsa really had made a study of state law. He uses legal terms correctly. But in the cases of Atithi this factual-idealistic description is of first importance. The poet obviously wishes to show his gifts in this unemotional field too. But he certainly also wished to show the rulers of his own time a model of an informed and politically intelligent government. It may have given him special pleasure to clothe this "scientific" chapter in poetic language. One may here call to mind that in the 12th Book of the epic of Mahābhārata there are about 120 songs presenting political lessons in the Śloka epic metre which Kālidāsa also employed in the song about Atithi.

> Kālidāsa here pictured an ideal king. Atithi, like Dilīpa, was still guided by the Brahman Vasishṭha. He always kept faith, and he never demanded the return of anything he had given away. Through his spies he knew everything that went on in his own and in neighbouring kingdoms. He held council daily. He worked according to a plan. He gathered a great treasure together in his treasury, only to distribute it again; he was modest when praised and fought only just wars (making no annexations, never taking the lives of conquered kings, or their wives or treasure), only seeking victory for the purpose of offering up the sacrifice of horses etc.
>
> 8.–27. One song following the Atithi song deals briefly with twenty kings, by name and characterisation. All were ideal. Only in the case of a certain Pariyātra Kālidāsa tells that he placed his son upon the throne so that he himself could indulge his insatiable lusts, for a king lives like a prisoner without happiness. Dhruvasandhi, the last of the line, was killed by a lion while out hunting when his son Sudarśana was only six years old. Both these kings are criticised by the poet. At any rate, the commentator Mallinātha adds that the passion for hunting can be expected to bring evil results.

Kālidāsa took all these names of kings not from the Rāmāyana but from a Purāṇa, the nearest being the line given in the Vishnupurāṇa.

> 28. Sudarśana became king when he was six years old, and Kālidāsa took pleasure in describing the child-king. He did not need to do anything, for his enemies already trembled before his power, even though his little feet did not reach the footstool before his throne.

It has so far not been possible to detect irony in this description of a wonder child. Perhaps Kālidāsa believed firmly enough in the old Indian despotic monarchy to accept the idea of its power being anchored in such a child.

> 29. After this child, who grew up, married and became a hermit, came Agnivarṇa, the last king of the poem, the demoralised descendant of the famous house of Raghu. Agnivarṇa retired from affairs of state into the compound of his women. If the people wished to see him and his ministers begged for an audience, he simply stretched his foot out of the window for the people to see. The people honoured the kingly foot, Kālidāsa adds.

Here one should bear in mind that Rāma, when he retreated into the jungle, left his sandals behind to represent him on the throne. Footprints were an ancient symbol on old stone monuments. But in this case Kālidāsa was certainly poking fun at the despots and at the people as well.

Agnivarṇa drank liqueur from the lips of his palace ladies; he himself accompanied his singers on the lute. But as king he could not permit himself to be beaten with a leather girdle by jealous ladies; it was not kingly to send love messengers to new concubines behind the backs of his queens. He polished the soles of his favourite's feet. He eyed his women so shamelessly that even they lowered their gaze. He amused himself at night and slept during the day.

It is certainly not easy to determine what was decent or permissible for a king, and what was considered undignified in the complicated love life of those times[93]. But Kālidāsa undoubtedly intended to express disapproval of this behaviour in a successor of Raghu, Rāma and Atithi, and the fate of this lascivious occupant of the throne in the honourable city of Ayodhyā also indicates this.

> As a result of his loose living Agnivarṇa became consumptive. As the waning of the moon, as an oil lamp consumes itself, as a lake dries up in the heat of summer, so did the dynasty decline. The ministers lied to the people that the king was occupied with rites which would assure the succession to the throne (excuses already recommended by Kauṭalya in his Book of State!). But the doctors could not help. The king died and the ministers burnt his body secretly in the palace garden. Although he had loved so much, Agnivarṇa left no son. But shortly afterwards the ministers discovered that his principal wife was pregnant, and they crowned the embryo in the womb of the weeping widow.

Here ends Kālidāsa's book. In the Purāṇas the dynasty goes on, and there have therefore been doubts as to whether the work was completed. It is certainly remarkable that the poem ends with a particularly erotic song, as in "The Birth of the War God". But this does not justify the assumption that a continuation has been lost, as in the case of the latter poem, where one expects an account of the birth of the child god. In "The Line of Raghu" it is difficult to picture how the poet might have concluded his work.

If Kālidāsa did conclude his work with the miserable death of this lascivious person, then he did so for the purpose of showing with absolute clarity the decline of the famous dynasty, indicated by his comparison to the oil lamp and so on. This would be consistent with his having criticised more or less sharply Rāma, his father Aja, and in fact nearly every king of this dynasty. He took this Vaishnava dynasty as his subject in order to write a mirror of princes, containing delicate and emphatic criticisms. He clearly also enjoyed allowing free poetic rein to his sensual feelings and describing with perception and in wonderful poetic language the most exciting situations in the love lives of highly-placed gentlemen. He was in fact a great poet of his times, familiar with all human situations, and it was no coincidence that Kālidāsa's death, according to Indian anecdote, took place in a harlot's house.

On the other hand, he showed up the loyalty of the ministers who helped the unborn heir to the throne instead of seizing power for themselves. Nor does the poet forget to indicate that the people agreed to the crowning of the unborn king. This is taking things even further than in the case of the six-year-old boy king Sudarśana. But even here, if we understand Kālidāsa aright, there is no irony intended. The poet has given his readers the chance to believe in the happy continuation of this dynasty.

But at the same time, he has indicated the disappearance of the dynasty in his comparison with the oil lamp. He divided the dynasty into two parts, first the older rulers from Dilīpa to Kuśa—the mythical rulers with their legendary and fairy-tale deeds—and after them what we might call the historical kings, above all Atithi, Sudarśana and Agnivarṇa. The song of the twenty briefly described kings indicates the transition.

The chapters on the dynasties in the Purāṇas also deal with past mythical generations in a similar way, but they go on to the historical dynasties, whose histories are often told in the form of prophecies. Originally, in the Mahābhārata and in the Rāmāyaṇa, only the mythical kings were described. It is not yet clear when the historical dynasties were first mentioned in the Purāṇas. It could have been at the beginning of the Gupta period, shortly before Kālidāsa's time, and as far as we know first in the Vishṇupuraṇa. Thus in this respect too Kālidāsa does not present anything absolutely new; but this is no detriment to his greatness as a poet.

One can compare Raghu as the ideal warrior king of the mythical part with Atithi as the "scientific" ruler of the historical part, and Aja as the passionate lover of the first part with Agnivarṇa, the lascivious lover of the second part. Such observations can also be carried much further, and can help bring us nearer to the poet's intentions.

An ordinary court poet would have flattered his patrons in a very different way, and would have presented his legendary and his "historical" kings as faultless. It is Kālidāsa's great achievement that he did not do this, but was critical of them. That his criticisms were directed more to their dealings with women than to their mistakes in governing coincides with his preference for singing of human love. He was the child of his own times, to whom the Book of Love was in a sense more important than the Book of State.

7. *Śakuntalā or The Token Ring*

In order to pay just tribute to the beauty of this drama of King Dushyanti's love for the hermit-girl Śakuntalā[94], it is necessary to touch briefly on the background of the story.

The basis of the poem is a well-known legend of a man wandering far from his homeland who learns to love a maiden, hurries home and leaves a token ring with her so that she can identify herself or her coming child to him later on. The old Buddhists of India already told a legend of this kind; a king seduced a maiden gathering wood, and when the son of their secret love grew up, his mother brought him to the king. He recognised her and his ring again, but denied it until the mother, as pure and faithful wife, performed a miracle and proved the fatherhood of her son. The king then recognised the boy as his son.

Buddha is said to have told this story to the historical king Bimbisāra of Magadha, when he refused to recognise his son by a slave woman. The same king is said to have had a son by a harlot in a foreign city, to have left her a ring and to have recognised the son through the ring. A similar story was told of the Emperor Justinian of Byzantium and his wife Antonia. In the line of Judah in the Old Testament it is told of Tamar and Judah that Judah, after lying with her as a prostitute, left her a ring by which he later recognised her when she was pregnant. This is therefore a legendary theme which may well have its roots in actual fact. It had a special significance in dynasties where it was important to maintain the purity of the line and to establish the genuineness of doubtful sons.

In old India this legend was also woven into the line of the most famous dynasty known to us, that of the heroes of the Mahābhārata—the moon dynasty[95]. It is contained in the story of Prince Bharata, after whom the Bharata were named, the India of today gets its name of Bharat and the great Bharat epic its name—the Mahābhārata. The Bharata line is given at the beginning of this epic and the legend is here a kind of interpolation certainly worked into it at a very early date.

Dushyanta, a world ruler of this dynasty, arrived while out hunting at a part of the jungle where the Brahman Kaṇya lived as a hermit, fell in love with his "daughter" Śakuntalā, who was actually the daughter of a kingly (non-Brahman) wise man, Viśvāmitra, and Menakā, a nymph. Dushyanta seduced her at once to a secret love marriage, which was permitted to men of his rank, promised that her son should be his successor, and returned home to the city. When her son was six years old Śakuntalā went to the king, who pretended not to remember her. Śakuntalā appealed to his conscience and spoke wonderful words on the dignity of a wife and mother to him. He must keep his word. A voice from heaven confirmed the genuineness of her son. The king then declared that he had been waiting for this miracle, so that there should be no doubt about the son. He called him Bharata and proclaimed him his heir.

In this account of the epic there is no mention of the ring, but there is no doubt that it belongs to the type of the Buddhist legend. In Kālidāsa's drama, on the other hand, the ring plays an important part; he had therefore known not only this epic account, but also a version of the story with the ring. This legend of Bharata was later retold in the Puraṇas, certainly partly under the influence of Kālidāsa's famous work.

After the prologue with the stage director and the singer, which Goethe so much admired, Kālidāsa opens Act I with King Dushyanta following a gazelle in his chariot and being drawn farther and farther into the jungle

> until he reaches the hermit dwelling of Kaṇva. The hermits who dwell here in a colony beg him to spare the gazelle's life and he does so.

In Kālidāsa's time kings no longer drove in such chariots to hunt or to war; they rode on elephants. Thus the poet took his audience back into olden times at the very beginning. In "The Line of Raghu" he began Dilīpa's journey to Vasishṭha's hermitage in a similar way. He wafted his city audience into the romance of the forests.

> Kaṇva is not at home, and his "daughter" Śakuntalā is to receive him. The king sees her, her dress stretched tight over her swelling breasts, as she tends the hermitage garden with two friends, and listens to their girlish chatter. A bee angrily buzzes round Śakuntalā and the king steps forward to protect her. He introduces himself as a royal judge, however[96]. Śakuntalā and the king fall in love at first sight. But the girl is shy, silent, prepares no worthy reception for the guest, and as her friends urge her to do so, the guest himself does not insist.

Śakuntalā is quite different from Pārvatī, who serves Śiva humbly. She is in ove, but Pārvatī feels herself to be the chosen bride. Śakuntalā is overwhelmed by her love, and the same kind of numbness overtakes her again in the fourth act when the guest Durvāsas arrives.

> Her friends soon realise what has happened and tease her. Ashamed, Śakuntalā wants to run away, but love holds her back when her friends call to her. The king has made hasty enquiries about her and her family, to find out whether custom permits him to marry her. The pair are interrupted. The king's hunters approach the hermit settlement and he must see that they do not disturb the hermits.

Act I is thus taken up with this first scene of ripening love in the hermit's forest.

> At the beginning of Act II the "Vidūshaka" appears alone. The Vidūshaka is the king's friend, a Brahman but not learned, who speaks the people's language and complains of the trials of hunting, far from the comforts of the city and the palace.

He is the comic figure of all three of Kālidāsa's dramas. He begs the king to return home and urges him not to neglect his government duties any longer. Although he argues in his own interests and appears so comical, he is very loyal to his master and friend and many of his opinions are absolutely correct.

> But the king is in love, wants to put himself at the disposal of the hermits and call off the hunt, so he sends for his captain.
> The king declares that he is calling off the hunt to please the Vidūshaka, who as a Brahman condemns the sin of hunting. The captain, on the other hand, argues that hunting is a sport and of educational value to kings. But he whispers to the Vidūshaka to stick to his objection to hunting. The king sends his hunters home.

The captain praises hunting as was required by state law and in dealing with noblemen. But he only contradicts the Vidūshaka, the Brahman, in order to please the king. The king for his part does not speak openly either; only the Vidūshaka speaks candidly in this scene. The poet, as well as his audience, must have got considerable fun out of this hypocritical court scene.

> The king is now alone with his intimate friend and he tells him of his love for Śakuntalā. He asks the Vidūshaka to help him to think of a reason for lengthening his stay with the hermits. The hermits then come and beg his help in protecting their rites against the demons. On the other hand a messenger also comes from his mother, calling him to take part in a rite for her. Coming quickly to a decision he sends his friend to his mother, so that the Vidūshaka gets his wish to return to the city fulfilled. But to prevent the Vidūshaka from disclosing too much, the king explains that he is not thinking very seriously about the hermit maiden, for she would not fit in well in the palace.

Chance helps the king. The Rāmāyaṇa tells how the hermit Viśvāmitra fetched Rāma to protect his sacrifice from demons and how thereafter Viśvāmitra guided Rāma to Mithita where he won Sītā. Kālidāsa may have had this in mind here.

But the king's untruthfulness to the Vidūshaka produces fateful results. This faithful fool believes the king. If the king had not lied at this juncture, his friend would later have been able to lessen the tragic fate of Śakuntalā as it was played out in Act VI. Blame attaches to Dushyanta here. But nobody blames him. Kālidāsa, however, noted this intentionally—as a criticism of despots.

> In Act III Dushyanta listens to Śakuntalā with her two friends and learns from their conversation that the maiden loves him as much as he loves her.

In the "Cloud Messenger" there was already an indication that Indian lovers need such proofs from their loved ones because they are too shy to confess their love on the stage. The king, who has a houseful of women, does not dare to confess his love for this woodland girl. He who can command, who receives offers of beautiful girls from flatterers, wishes to woo and to be loved for himself alone; that is why he concealed his royal rank. He longs to be needed, although it is hard for him in his impatience to wait. Kālidāsa even has sympathy for the highly placed personage who can seldom find real love.

> Dushyanta assures Śakuntalā's cautious friends that he actually has many wives, but that Śakuntalā shall be his only true queen.
>
> Reassured, the friends leave the lovers alone. Dushyanta draws her passionately down beside him, but she resists. She loves him, but she cannot command herself; her father must give her away. He will hear nothing of waiting and urges her to come to him at once in secret love marriage. Then a hermit woman appears, Śakuntalā helps the king to hide and the scene breaks off.

Śakuntalā's self-control and restraint resemble closely Pārvatī's behaviour towards the passionate Śiva. But Śakuntalā loves more hotly, and Śiva did not urge Pārvatī to a secret love marriage. These humans love differently from the gods however. It seems as if the poet wrote this drama after his epic, and at the same time as a modification of the ideas on the nature of love which he had expressed there.

Kālidāsa then passed over the consummation of their love and the presentation of the royal ring, which he did not wish to show on the stage. Here he did not wish to show those details which he had sung with such burning passion in the epic of Pārvatī and Śiva. Love conquered Śakuntalā's modesty and she did not await the hermit Kaṇva's return or the ritual wedding. She conceived from the king, who then returned to his palace with the promise to fetch her in a few days. The poet avoided explaining why the king hurried away without waiting to speak with Kaṇva. This is a weakness of the drama.

> At the beginning of Act IV the audience learns from a conversation between the two friends of what has happened in the intervening time, which can only have been brief.
>
> Behind the stage an important scene is played out. The Brahman Durvāsas arrives, but Śakuntalā, sunk in her thoughts of love, neglects to pay the usual honours due to a guest. He puts a curse upon her, that he of whom she thinks will forget her. The friends hear the curse, hasten to him and succeed in persuading him to make the curse less terrible in that the king is to remember Śakuntalā again when he sees his ring. In order not to agitate Śakuntalā even more, the friends conceal this event from her and from everyone else.

Durvāsas is the mythical incarnation of the troublesome begging Brahman. He distributes curses immediately if he is not suitably received as a guest. Religious beggars were at that time a curse upon the land. Wise Brahmans should be calm, selfcontrolled. But this hasty fellow is introduced by the poet in order not to allow Śakuntalā's fault to appear too great. She is to blame in not welcoming Dushyanta in a fitting manner on account of her shyness, and Durvāsas on account of her preoccupation with her love. King Dushyanta is at the same time excused for forgetting his beloved, since he was fated to forget. None of this appeared in the epic, where the king only pretended not to recognise Śakuntalā, and there was no ring and no curse. But here love makes the loving girl forgetful and the king is to blame for his anxious lie to Vidūshaka. Kālidāsa knew more about the inner nature of lovers than the author of the epic, and he pictured them with loving care.

> Kaṇva comes home; as seer he knows all, and he sends Śakuntalā at once to her husband. The act then deals mainly with the friends dressing the parting bride and with Kaṇva's "daughter's" farewell to her friends and to the animals and plants of her beloved hermit dwelling.

Indians regard this as the finest gem in Kālidāsa's art. The act is even for Europeans infinitely moving, with its heart-rending farewell. For in Europe too the bride leaves her home with tears, a custom which is dying out, however.

But in India parents and daughters feel this parting much more deeply than we. The girl is given away as a marriageable child, to go into a strange family where an almost slave-like existence awaits her. The mother-in-law will train the young wife to help her in the household and to be an obedient servant of her husband. Serious life begins for the girl; work instead of play. And whether real love awaits her is generally uncertain—is in fact not regarded as important—since the pair have not been allowed to see each other up to this time. Marriage in India, up till quite recent times, was more a matter of handing over a pair of working hands from one family to another than of love. If the bride's parents know this from bitter experience and the bride knows it too, what wonder that she weeps? How deeply then must Indians honour a poet who could bring the human tragedy in this touching old Indian love story to the stage in such tender, dignified and impassioned language!

In sharp contrast to Act IV, the next act begins with a short comic scene.

> Dushyanta stands between two wives in his palace, one of whom feels herself neglected, and the Vidūshaka is to talk to her.

Here Kālidāsa points the contrast between the careless, irresponsible life of the despot and the heartfelt love of Śakuntalā, that child of nature.

> The old chamberlain announces to the king the arrival of a group of hermits from Kaṇva's hermit settlement. The king sends his palace priest to receive them with full honours and to lead them to the hall of the sacrificial fires, where he intends to learn their wishes himself. He meets them. The poet describes at length how both groups, that of the king and that of the hermits, approach, observe and greet each other ceremoniously. Here the poet makes the contrast between high court ceremony and the comic scene of the jealous wives.
>
> The king sees a veiled woman amongst the hermits, but does not allow himself to look upon the wife of another. In remarks aside to the woman doorkeeper who accompanies him (women servants were often employed about the palace), he indicates his thoughts to the audience. One of the hermits delivers Kaṇva's message about Śakuntalā, whom he herewith hands over to her husband.
>
> Dushyanta does not understand the speech, for he can remember nothing. He refuses Śakuntalā, the pregnant wife of another, and the door-keeper expresses her admiration of him for not accepting such a beautiful wife eagerly.

Here it was certainly the poet's intention to express through her the general opinion of the people on this subject.

> Śakuntalā is unveiled and is to speak to Dushyanta herself. She wishes to show him his ring, but has lost it. She reminds him in vain of a scene in the woods when he tried to give water to a gazelle and the shy animal would only take it from Śakuntalā, to whom it was accustomed.

This recalls the passage in "The Cloud Messenger" when Sītā refers to the conversation with the monkey Hanūman. This was a customary theme in such scenes.

> Dushyanta, however, sees only a womanly trick and a charming lie in this. Śakuntalā is angry and accuses him of dishonesty. Dushyanta feels the genuineness of her anger. The hermits scold her, that she is now suffering the consequences of her carelessness; but they also threaten the king with overthrow on account of his heartlessness. They go, and Śakuntalā is not allowed to go with them. She must remain in her husband's house, or he can also cast her out, since he is her absolute lord and master. Dushyanta is beset with doubts, for he is not permitted to take the wife of another. He asks his palace priest's advice. The priest advises Dushyanta to wait and see whether the coming child is a son bearing the signs of a ruler of the world, and permits Śakuntalā to remain the while in his, the priest's, house. The king agrees to this, but Śakuntalā, weeping, calls upon the earth goddess to open up her bosom and receive her.
> A fairy appears suddenly and whisks her away. The astonished king does not know what to do.

In the epic, Śakuntalā spoke to the king in the corresponding scene like an epic heroine, of morals and justice. Here she remains mostly silent, and only at the end, when all else has failed, does she wish to leave the earth. Kālidāsa has added this to the old story and probably thought of Sītā here, who also called on the earth goddess to take her to her bosom.

Kālidāsa would seem to have followed the old epic of Rāmāyana throughout in this drama. In the old legend of Śakuntalā the separation ended witht his scene. The young mother waited six years, then brought her son to his father and established his position. But Kālidāsa let the pregnant Śakuntalā be brought to the king without his recognising her, and then composed a second separation where Śakuntalā is carried off by the fairy, bears her child and then, when the boy grows up strong and healthy, the father is reunited with mother and son. In the Rāmāyaṇa, on the other hand, Sītā was twice separated from Rāma, first when she was carried off to Lankā, found again and purified through ordeal by fire. Then years later, when Rāma cast her out during pregnancy and sent her to the hermitage of Vālmīki, where she gave birth to twins. Only when the boys grew up did the father find both mother and sons again. The resemblance between Kālidāsa's drama and Vālmīki's epic is sufficient to assume that the drama actually is an adaptation of the epic. We shall return to this point.

Here Kālidāsa replaced the old miracle of a voice from heaven which confirms the genuineness of the king's sons by a new miracle—Śakuntalā is spirited away. A miracle of this kind is somewhat incongruous; we should prefer the action to develop without miraculous intervention. But the Indians believed in the heavenly world of fairies and nymphs, and Śakuntalā's mother belonged to this world. She, and her like, wished to lighted Śakuntalā's lot. By her intervention she wished to ease the time of waiting for her until Dushyanta should set eyes upon the ring which would give him back his memory. Durvāsas' curse, according to Hindu superstition, must be fulfilled. In this sense Kālidāsa was also superstitious. Only a very few materialist-minded people were courageous enough not to believe in such things.

> Act VI begins with a street fight scene. Two policemen led by a brother-in-law of the king drag a fisherman on to the stage, beating him the while. They have found him in possession of a valuable ring. They accuse him of stealing it from the king. The fisherman denies this, saying he found the ring in the belly of a fish. One policeman is particularly violent and tries to seize the fisherman by the throat. But the other holds him back and the king's brother-in-law, although he laughs at the fisherman, listens as he reminds him that every man must take over his calling from his father, whatever it may be. The king's brother-in-law accepts the fisherman's story and hurries to the king. The policemen wait on the stage and guess what will come out of the affair. The king's brother-in-law returns, gives the fisherman a handsome reward from the king, who had wept when he saw the ring, and all four go off the stage to drink wine at the fisherman's invitation.

The sad fifth act opened with a comic scene with the king, and the poet again opens Act VI, which is to be equally sad, with a popular scene. The king had many wives, and these all had relatives, so that a despot had innumerable brothers-in-law to provide for, whom he employed as officials[98]. In the drama of Vasantasenā the villain and opponent of the hero was a brother-in-law of the king. Here Kālidāsa has created a more good-natured king's brother-in-law, who only appears slightly sycophantic when he and the policemen go off to drink wine at the fisherman's expense. For the audience the fisherman's innocence was clear from the outset.

Kālidāsa has thus enriched the old saga by the inclusion of a well-known legendary motif, which also grew up in old India, of the jewel found in the fish's belly. He needed this to balance the motif of the token ring and the lover's separation.

The fisherman belonged to his father's caste of fisherman. This calling was looked upon with contempt, on the one hand because fishermen killed fish—a sin which was essential to their calling and caste—and on the other hand because they stank. But fishermen also have their pride, and the king's brother-in-law can find no argument against his statement that he must carry on his father's calling. How can he therefore be to blame? Kālidāsa was not alone in his defence of the poor, but it should be emphasised that a poet who preaches such thoughts is to be highly respected.

> After this preliminary, Act VI goes on to inform the audience through the conversation of two palace servants that spring has come. The chamberlain reminds them that the king has called off the usual spring festival. He is suffering from remorse.

> Dushyanta appears with the Vidūshaka. He cancels a court session because he has been unable to sleep. In the park he tells the Vidūshaka of his misery over his mistake in casting out his beloved. He sends for a picture which he himself had painted of Śakuntalā and her two friends, for he wishes to add to it a flower in his beloved's ear and a bee humming around her. He wants to ward off the bee, and the Vidūshaka has to remind him that the girl and the bee are not really there before him, but only in the picture. A nymph has watched the whole scene in the park. She wants to bring her sister news of the king and is glad that he has so nobly acknowledged his mistake. But the Vidūshaka comes to the private conclusion that the king has gone mad.

The memory of the bee in this act points back to Act II. The Brahman's remark that the lover has gone mad reminds us of Kālidāsa's remark about the spirit in love at the beginning of "The Cloud Messenger". There is a touch of irony here. But Dushyanta's emotion as he looks at the picture and the memory of the beautiful days of love is in general not placed in a comedy light by the poet, but perhaps somewhat sentimentally expressed for German tastes. Perhaps Indians feel more strongly and compellingly than we cold northerners. But we must be cautious in our opinions on such expressions of passion, for we have no means of knowing whether and how far Kālidāsa was exaggerating.

> Dushyanta sends the Vidūshaka away with the picture. The minister sends him a court case for his decision. Should the property of a childless merchant lost at sea be sequestered? The king orders that time be allowed to elapse, in case a wife of the merchant should become pregnant, in which case the child would be heir to the property.

The poet introduced this scene to illustrate the king's sense of justice. One is reminded here of the end of "The Line of Raghu" and the crowning of the unborn child.

> Dushyanta now thinks of his own childlessness, for which he has only himself to blame; his dynasty will end with him. In his sorrow he falls unconscious to the ground.

The poet emphasises that although Dushyanta has many wives, and has also played with many women, yet he had only born one son, by Śakuntalā. He had meant it seriously when he told Śakuntalā's friends that she would be his only true queen. Here it was a question, as in the epic and in the older type of fable too, of the perpetuation and maintenance of the purity of the dynasty, of the Bharatas as of Judah or of Justinian. Rāma was also true to Sītā all his life, beyond her death and during their separation. Śiva was also basically monogamous. The Indian wife suffered under polygamy; she too wanted her husband for herself alone. A good father demanded monogamy from his son-in-law. Kālidāsa's Dushyanta fairly nearly approached this ideal.

> From behind the stage came sounds of distress from the Vidūshaka. A demon had seized him and tried to gobble him up. Dushyanta awakes from his

fainting fit and out of his depression, calls for his bow and rescues his friend. Mātali, chariot-driver of Indra king of the gods, appears. He has engineered this scene to awake the king out of his apathy. Indra needs him for his battle against the demons.

Dushyanta climbs on to the god's chariot and hastens into battle.
Act VII begins with the return of Dushyanta and Mātali through the air as victors in the fight against the demons. In the northern mountains of the super-human world they approach the hermitage of the mythical Brahman Mārīca, who is at the moment instructing his wife Aditi, mother of the gods Indra and Vishnu, in her wifely duties. The king wishes to do honour to the wise man, dismounts from his chariot, waits there and sees a youth approaching, holding a young lion's mouth open to count its teeth. Two hermit maidens try in vain to prevent his doing this, and they beg the king to set the lion free. The king does so and learns that the boy is no Brahman but a member of the king's own family. A hermit woman points out a clay bird—a peacock—to the boy, who misunderstands her and thinks his mother is coming. This play on words in untranslatable for Germans. The boy had lost an amulet while playing with the lion; the king picks it up and the girls are astonished, for only the boy or his parents are allowed to touch it. Anyone else touching it causes it to turn into a snake which bites him. They say they have often seen this happen.

Dushyanta is about to embrace the boy as his son, but the boy resists, saying his father's name is Dushyanta. Śakuntalā appears, anxious about the amulet, and the king falls at her feet, begging her to forgive him. But she has forgiven him long ago. Then Mātali brings Dushyanta to the wise man, Mārīca, who tells him about Durvāsas' curse. Now for the first time the lovers hear that the king is not himself to blame, for he had really lost his memory. There is no further mention of blame attaching to either Dushyanta or Śakuntalā. The wise man blesses them and prophesies that the boy will be a world conqueror. He gives him the name Bharata. A heavenly messenger brings Kaṇva the happy news.

The king's chariot ride at the beginning of this act points back to the first act. Act IV, with Śakuntalā's farewell to the forest, is the climax of this drama, the central act. In Act II and in the last act but one the bee plays a part; in the first and last the chariot ride. Thus Kālidāsa must have had a secret joy in a certain artistic composition of the seven acts, for apparently nobody has previously noticed this sequence of events[99].

The human hermitage of the first act is followed by the heavenly one of the seventh. In the Rāmāyana, Rāma and Sītā, the banned couple, live many difficult but happy years in the hermitages of various Brahmans, and Rāma finally bans Sītā to such a hermitage—that of Vālmīki. There she bears her two sons, very much like Śakuntalā. But Vālmīki lets the mother with her sons meet their father again at the great horse sacrifice. Kālidāsa, on the other hand, lets

Dushyanta come to the heavenly hermitage after his victory over the demons and there find his wife and child again at last. Dushyanta falls at Śakuntalā's feet and begs her forgiveness. Rāma, on the other hand, lets Sītā come to him and purify herself by an ordeal before the people. Vākmīki leads Sītā to Rāma, where she proclaims her innocence. The difference between Rāma's and Dushyanta's behaviour is especially significant, since Dushyanta is actually not to blame for Śakuntalā's banishment. Durvāsas is to blame, and perhaps Śakuntalā herself in some measure, because of her loving absent-mindedness. Dushyanta had indeed evaded the thruth in Act II in denying his love to the Vidūshaka. This had evil results, for if he had not believed Dushyanṭa's earlier denial, the Vidūshaka would have been obliged to remind him of his love for Śakuntalā in Act V. The Vidūshaka was not actually present when Śakuntalā was banished in Act V, but this was only coincidence[100], and the king reproached his friend in Act VI for not having reminded him. But it is doubtful in any case whether a reminder would have been effective against Durvāsas' curse.

Thus in the poet's opinion Dushyanta was far less to be blamed than Rāma. It was Kālidāsa who, in the "Line of Raghu", allowed sharp reproaches to be levelled by various persons against Rāma on account of his attitude to Sītā. It is therefore possible that after his criticism of Rāma in "The Line of Raghu", Kālidāsa wished to compose a sort of improved version of the lovers' separation theme. Thus he may have taken the repeated separation from the Rāmāyana and built them into his own story of the old saga. He caused Sītā's loving laughter to draw down the hatred of Śūrpanakhā on her, and in the same way he presented Śakuntalā's negligence as the result of her love. But he strongly contrasts the hard moralist Rāma with the soft, loving Dushyanta who loses his memory, but despite his innocence still falls at Śakuntalā's feet and begs her forgiveness.

Even if one does not tend to believe that Kālidāsa worked so consciously in his criticism of the old epic of Rāma, there still remains a very noticeable difference between the two works. Both deal with love, separation and reunion of a kingly couple. But Vālmīki's old poem belongs in essence to the old slave society, Kālidāsa's to the rising feudal society. As suggested above, we cannot yet picture in any great detail how Indian society may have changed in the intervening years. But such changes must be taken into account in considering the two works.

A comparison of the two pairs of lovers shows that Vālmīki's Rāma and Sītā are a genuinely wedded couple, without children, but linked by years of hardship together. Dushyanta and Śakuntalā, on the other hand, present more the picture of a pair of children, tenderly and passionately in love. Sītā is the model of wifely loyalty. She was won in competition against other wooers. She could not conceivably have given herself to her lover in secret. She would not be frightened by a bee and rejoice at having a hero to protect her from an insect. And Rāma is no Dushyanta who plays with jealous court women. Rāma has his loyal and brave brother Lakshmaṇa at his side, but no clever-comic simpleton of a Brahman like the Vidūshaka. Although Kālidāsa imitated old social forms with the hero's chariot rides, he could not put himself back into Vālmīki's archaic world. He could not do justice to the chaste love story of the Rāmāyana, and he was not fair in his estimate of Vālmīki, however fair his criticism of Rāma was. It is well worth while to compare the differences in these two works and to consider them in detail, for this will assist us in understanding both poets. Both were very great and it is impossible to decide which was the greater. In such a comparison it is important to consider not only the personalities of the poets, but also to bear in mind that they represent different stages in the development of Indian society.

It must, however, be emphasised that this drama deals in essence with only two figures, the man and the woman. The son, the Brahman friend, the girl friends, Kaṇva and so on, are not individual portraits. But in the figure of Śakuntalā, as in the case of Pārvatī, it is possible to speak of a development in character. At the outset she is simply a budding maiden, falling in love at first sight, shy and waiting for her father's return, then later seduced, pregnant, sent away by her father, refused by her husband, she retires to the hermitage of the heavenly sages, becomes a mother, forgives her husband and meets him, the penitent, as happy mother again. The poet loved this figure, as he loved Pārvatī.

But he has not succeeded quite so well with Dushyanta as with Śiva. Kālidāsa succeeded in picturing the development of Śiva, greatest of the gods, from sorrowing widow to ever-young, loving husband. Despite his innocence, Dushyanta (whose mistakes are of minor importance) remains uninteresting. He is too passive for our tastes, too much the plaything of fate, of the curse upon him, of his loved one's error. In Dushyanta the poet brought to the stage an idealised despotic ruler of his time, without sufficient humorous criticism. An ideal figure like this is too unrealistic to be moving. It should be remembered that in the epic Śakuntalā was presented as a fiery advocate of woman's rights in connection with her husband. Kālidāsa made a lovesick maiden of her, and replaced legal problems and the political problem of the purity of the dynasty by the problem of human love. This deprived the man of an important quality which could not be compensated for as in the wonderful figure of the loving Śakuntalā, rightly appreciated by Goethe as "the flower and the fruit".

8. Urvaśī Won By Valour[101]

The legendary figure of Urvaśī is know nin India from the oldest extant literary work, the Ṛgveda[102], here presented in the form of a song in dialogue. Purūravas, her human lover, pleads with the swan maiden (or the bird maiden)[103] Urvaśī, who has flown away from him. He has met her again with her playmates as birds on a lake. But she scorns him, while at the same time holding out hopes of another meeting. In the oldest Indian prose work, a Brahmaṇa, this song is placed within a long prose narrative. The Apsaras (heavenly nymph) Urvaśī loved King Purūravas, but on the condition that she must never see him naked, otherwise she would leave him. They were happy together for many years. Then the Gandharvas (heavenly genii) wished to free her of this human tie. Urvaśī always had two lambs tied to her bed which she loved like children. The Gandharvas stole these. They bleated as they were being led away and Urvaśī complained that there was no man there to protect them. Purūravas sprang up, naked as he was. The Gandharvas sent a flash of lightning and Urvaśī saw her husband naked and vanished. He seeks her, finds her on a lake swimming with her playmates, and the dialogue follows. It seems that he performed a special rite at her suggestion and became a Gandharva, so that he could be united with her forever in life as a Gandharva.

It is typical of this old legend that the super-human beloved is separated (in connection with her child) from her husband because a taboo has been broken. In some very old types of society it has been established that men were allowed to visit their wives only at night, and this was connected with a superstitious fear that the fruitfulness of marriage would otherwise be endangered. The condition imposed in the case of Urvaśī may be a reminder of this. But in the Brāhmaṇa the happy ending may have been something new. In another passage of the Brāhmaṇa the pair of sticks used in ritual fire ceremonies is connected with this pair of passionate lovers and the lower wood called Urvaśī, but the stick whirling around it is called Purūravas.

Later, in the many versions of this legend, the bird motif is lacking. But it was (as in the legend of the token ring) retained in the line of heroes in the epic Mahābhārata in such a way that Purūravas appears as the first human king of this dynasty, which was descended from the moon. The son of the moon, the planet Mercury, was Purūravas' father. His mother was Īlā, created by Brahmā, sometimes as man, sometimes as woman. As a woman she was the wife of Mercury, as a man after Purūravas' birth she was Sudyumna, the first king of Prayāga (the present-day Allahabad, at the junction of the Ganges and Jumna)[104].

In the Mahābhārata Purūravas was a violent ruler, enemy of the Brahmans, who cursed and killed him[105]. In the old Book of State he was presented as a terrifying example of greed, who squeezed wealth from all four castes in his greed for gold[106]. In the epic of Harivamśa, probably composed somewhat later, he is shown as a pious and mighty king, who was chosen by Urvaśī as mate and lived fifty-nine happy years with her in the delightful forest lands of the Gangā in the Himalayas, where the gods dwell. His sons continued the dynasty in Prayāga[107]. Similar stories are told in more or less detail in all the Purāṇas.

But the actual literary source of Kālidāsa's work has not yet been determined. He certainly made very independent use of older sources. He was no longer concerned to present the story of the bird maiden and her curious condition, but rather to tell of the fate of a woman who was of quite a different type from Pārvatī or Śakuntalā. Urvaśī, according to legend, was an Apsaras. If these

Apsarases were originally bird maidens in Vedic mythology, (the name means literally "those moving on the water") they had become in Hindu mythology heavenly harlots, temple dancers and courtesans transferred, by priestly fantasy, to heaven where the god Indra ruled as king of the gods.

Indra's palace was pictured as very similar to that of a human despot, where beautiful dancers were customary and were regarded as slaves of the king, or as his wives or concubines. At the same time they were made use of in his palace intrigues wherever he needed them. If for instance a hermit went so far with his asceticism on earth as to threaten competition to the king of the gods, Indra sent him such an apsaras—like Menakā, mother of Śakuntalā—who was to seduce him and to deprive him thus of the magic power of his asceticism. This was how Urvaśī appeared in Kālidāsa's time.

> Act I of the drama begins with a cry for help by the Apsarases. One of them has been carried off. Menakā tells king Purūravas that Urvaśī and her friend Citralekhā have been carried off by the demon Keśin. The king mounts his war chariot and with his driver's rod mimes flight through the air.

Thus this drama, like "Śakuntalā", begins with a royal chariot ride, but one is also reminded of the last act of "Śakuntalā", where Dushyanta rides out to fight the demons on Indra's behalf.

> The excited crowd of Apsarases remains on the stage. The chariot with Purūravas bringing Urvaśī and Citralekhā returns from its flight; Her friend and the king are encouraging Urvaśī, who has just recovered consciousness. Citralekhā tells her of Purūravas' heroic rescue. Urvaśī and the king fall in love without proclaiming it. During their flight Purūravas touches Urvaśī's shoulder, and she shyly begs Citralekhā to draw a little away from her.

This erotic scene after the battle is typical of this drama. Urvaśī is still shy —the king also—but their coming together follows under quite different, more sensual circumstances than was the case with Pārvatī or Śakuntalā and their lovers. But as far as we know Kālidāsa found none of these things in literary sources. He allowed his poetic fantasy free play in portraying the heavenly harlot and her love.

> The chariot lands, the girls welcome their friends back. Then comes Citraratha, king of the Gandharvas, who had been sent by Indra to fight Keśin. Too late on the scene, he asks Purūravas to go to Indra. Purūravas refuses, saying that this is not the occasion to speak to Indra. Citraratha should escort the Apsarases to the king of the gods.

In his modesty Purūravas does not wish to claim thanks of Indra. But at the same time the poet hints that the king does not try to seize every opportunity to remain longer with Urvaśī, or to fly once more through the air with her.

> Urvaśī is not eager to follow her hurrying friends immediately, however. She lets Citralekhā thank Purūravas for her, and allows her necklace to get

entangled in a branch so as to cast another glance at the hero, and her friend understands her.

This play of the beautiful girl in love reminds us of Śakuntalā's play at the end of Act I.

Purūravas also rejoices to have had another glimpse of her, and returns home in his chariot.

The structure of this act is very similar to that of Act I in "Śakuntalā". The two are in love, but have not yet expressed it and must part. The characters of both main figures are indicated here. Purūravas' heroic deed is to be emphasised. Kālidāsa actually called the drama "Urvaśī or Valour" (vikrama); the audience is to be made aware of Purūravas' power.

Act II begins, as does Act II of "Śakuntalā", with a comic figure, the Brahman friend of the king, on the stage.

This friend, the Vidūshaka, feels that he will not be able to keep the king's secret to himself. Then comes a servant of the queen to find out what he knows. She cunningly hints that the king has made a mistake and addressed his queen by the name of his new love, and the Vidūshaka cannot contain himself any longer. He promises to help the queen and to try to wean the king away from his new love.

The onlookers know that the Brahman cannot keep his word. Dushyanta had been more cautious and had denied his love for Śakuntalā at the end of Act II. He had thus deprived himself of his friend's help. Kālidāsa thus varied what was perhaps a frequent motif at that time.

The king, who had been dispensing justice, comes lovesick on to the stage, asks the Vidūshaka whether he has kept his secret, and the Vidūshaka lies. He proposes that the king should go to the kitchen to cure his sorrow. They wander into the park, the king complaining, the Brahman encouraging him by suggesting that Urvaśī will not be hard to win, and the king takes his words as a prophecy. The Vidūshaka has no intention of helping the queen against Urvaśī.

Purūravas asks his friend to find a way to help him, and the Vidūshaka thinks the matter over. Then comes Urvaśī with her friend, who only now realises that Urvaśī is really looking for Purūravas. They hide so as to watch the king. They hear how the Vidūshaka advises the king to sleep, so as to dream of his beloved, or to paint a portrait of Urvaśī. Urvaśī is happy that the king loves her.

Dushyanta had also painted a picture of Śakuntalā, and in Act VI found delight in gazing at it; the spirit in "The Cloud Messenger" had lamented that although he had drawn a picture of his beloved on the rocks, his tears had prevented him from completing it with a picture of himself prostrate at her feet and thus at least united with her[103]. But Purūravas rejects his friend's proposal, for he is sleepless with love, and his tears would prevent him from painting a picture of Urvaśī.

The plaints of the king to his friend are a reminder of those of Dushyanta in Act II of "Śakuntalā". But the listening girls call Act III to mind, where it was Dushyanta who listened to Śakuntalā and her playmates, and are also a faint reminder of Act VI, where Śakuntalā's friends listen to Dushyanta's lament of love. But what is significant here is that the woman—Urvaśī—hastens to the man to assure herself in listening to him that he loves her. Śakuntalā or Pārvatī would not have done this, and it is a sign of Urvaśī's courtesan nature that she herself seeks out the man. This was in accordance with old Indian custom, which in poetry and miniature right up to late feudal times described maidens hastening to their lovers, even by night and storm which could not restrain them.

> Urvaśī decides to send Purūravas a love letter. She writes a verse on a strip of birch bark, lets it fall before the king. The Vidūshaka sees at once what it is; the king reads the verse and asks his friend to take care of the letter.

In Act III of "Śakuntalā", Śakuntalā had written a letter to the king, but at the suggestion of her friend. She herself was inexperienced in such matters, for she had not been educated in love like the harlot Urvaśī. And Śakuntalā had written on the usual palm leaf, as was customary in India. Urvaśī used birch bark, which was usual in Kashmir, in the mountain lands of the north.

> Now sure of the king's love, Urvaśī asks her friend to come out of her magic invisibility and to bring a greeting to the king from her. She does so, tells the king of Urvaśī's love, he answers and she fetches Urvaśī, who holds back a little, but quickly gives up her magic invisibility too, and shyly greets the king. He takes her hand and draws her to him. The Brahman asks her to greet him too, and she bows to him with a smile. Then a voice calls to Citralekhā from behind the stage to bring Urvaśī back to the heavenly regions, for she is to appear on the stage there. Urvaśī cannot utter a word; Citralekhā speaks to the king and leads Urvaśī away.

Urvaśī is now so shy that apart from the necessary greeting, "May you be victorious, O King!" she cannot utter a single word. The king seizes her hand, as Dushyanta had seized Śakuntalā's hand in Act III. But Śakuntalā had told him it was not fitting and begged him to release her. Śakuntalā was a well brought-up girl, like Pārvatī, who fled from Śiva's arms—quite unlike Urvaśī, for although Urvaśī appeared shy and retiring, she had not withdrawn her hand from the king's and had not reproached him. But this second meeting was disturbed, like the second meeting between Śakuntalā and Dushyanta in Act III. Thus far Act II of "Urvaśī" is similar to Acts II and III of "Śakuntalā". But whereas in "Śakuntalā" the impetuous Dushyanta proposes secret love marriage, although he does not get an immediate assent, Purūravas has nothing to say beyond a few compliments, and the only entertainment is derived from the Vidūshaka's joke in demanding a greeting from Urvaśī, which she gives in silence—a scene depicting human embarrassment quite unlike Act III of "Śakuntalā" but resembling Act II of "Mālavikā". The action is cleverly filled out and lengthened by the disturbance of the lovers.

The care with which Kālidāsa portrayed Urvaśī, the harlot maiden, is obvious. She is accustomed to men, she loves Purūravas and is sure of his love, and she is bold so long as she is with her friend. She writes him a love verse, but it is beyond her powers to speak in his presence. She becomes as shy as a bride. Śūdraka also, the great poet of the "Vasantasenā"—a drama almost as old—portrayed his harlot maiden with great human tenderness. Vasantasenā also loved only one man, the noble merchant Cārudatta, was shy in his presence and was finally freed from prostitution and became his true wife. But it is no discredit to Kālidāsa that he, the court poet, who is said to have died in a harlot's house in Ceylon and perhaps to have led a loose life with many beautiful women, made a heroine of the harlot Urvaśī. He did not despise this woman. In this he resembled the ascetic Buddha, who paid honour to the harlot Āmrapālī and visited her (though with due respect, only at table), and even preferred her invitation to that of certain noble gentlemen. As the fisherman in "Śakuntalā" emphasised, every kind of work inherited through caste is honourable, no matter if it stinks. Kālidāsa, who was also said to have been a poor shepherd in his youth, obviously did not feel any Brahman pride of caste and so did not condemn the harlot's profession.

> The Vidūshaka wants to cheer up the melancholy king with Urvaśī's love letter, when he finds he has lost it. The king upbraids him for his constant carelessness. The Vidūshaka hunts for the letter. The queen comes with her servant to watch her husband. She finds the letter, has it read to her and confronts the king with the letter in her hand. The king is at a loss what to do, and the Vidūshaka no less so. (What can a thief do when caught with the stolen goods on him, he thinks). The queen rages. The king falls at her feet and declares himself to be her slave. She is not taken in, but is afraid of acting unwisely, so she goes away without another word. Purūravas admits to his friend that this was the right thing to do, for without love forgiveness cannot be won. But despite his love for Urvaśī he still retains the same respect for the queen as before. She has not accepted his submission, however, so he feels himself superior to her again.

Dushyanta was spared such a scene with his queen. Kālidāsa has enriched his Urvaśī drama with the figure of the queen and has thus taken the opportunity to portray a new kind of woman. The queen's jealousy is justified, but she must be careful. It is not the king who is her slave, but she his! She has put herself in the wrong in not accepting his prayer for forgiveness at once. Even a queen could be in this unfortunate position. Purūravas had given no sign that he intended to give up his pursuit of Urvaśī, but she was expected to forgive him nevertheless.

The king's position is wretched too. He cannot leave his queen even though she has not yet given him a son. In his unhappiness he behaves poorly, argues sophistically that he is not hunting for a love letter, but for a secret state document. He turns for help to the comic figure, but in vain, and he has to allow himself to be caught in the act. Where is now the power of the conqueror of demons in Act I? His love for the harlot puts even a powerful king of olden times in this difficult position. Kālidāsa certainly got some fun out of depicting this scene.

> Act III begins with a prologue in which two pupils of the director of the heavenly theatre tell Bharata about Urvaśī's performance. She was to speak as Lakshmī of her love for Vishnu, but spoke of Purūravas by mistake. Bharata thereupon bans her to live on earth. But Indra recalls the love of Purūravas and Urvaśī for each other and takes the sting out of the curse by allowing her to remain with the king until she gives birth to a son.

The parallel passages in "Śakuntalā" Act IV begin with a dialogue between her friends in which they tell of Śakuntalā's neglect of Durvāsas and the curse he put upon her. Both women have irred and are accursed for love reasons. In both instances the curses are made less severe. But in Urvaśī's case the softening of the curse is equivalent to cancelling the punishment and transforming it into a reward, for Urvaśī is given by Indra to the earthly king. The heavenly director, Urvaśī's teacher Bharata, may be offended, but Indra is not. He has full understanding for his harlot and dancer. He is also not jealous. She is a harlot, and Indra, king of the gods, often made use of such Apsarases as tools in political matters, according to legend, just as kings on earth made use of their dancers. Indra used them to seduce dangerous hermits.

Kālidāsa did not need to labour this point to his audiences, as we Germans must do today. For him it was enough to let one of the theatre pupils say that Indra, who understood other men, had acted wisely. Audience and poet must have smiled over this. But how very far removed is this feudal court story from the action in the old Vedic legend of Urvaśī, which almost belongs to primitive society.

> After the prologue in heaven, Act III begins in Purūravas' palace. His chamberlain is sent by the queen to invite the king to her moon rites. She wants to reconcile herself with him there. She has herself become resigned to her fate. Purūravas has during daytime thrust his love into the background by the conduct of government business. He accepts her invitation. The Vidūshaka sees that a reconciliation is coming. They go together to attend the rites. Purūravas speaks enthusiastically of Urvaśī. At this moment Urvaśī comes with her friend Citralekhā from heaven. She is dressed as a girl who hastens to her lover at night. Both begin to listen to the king and his friend. They hear how the king describes that first touch on her shoulder in the chariot. Enflamed, Urvaśī steps forward, but she forgets that she is still invisible.

Dushyanta declared that he was so agitated by love that he could not concentrate on his duties as a judge. Kālidāsa perhaps wished to indicate that Purūravas was a strong, even an heroic king, although weak where women were concerned. The poet felt it necessary that Urvaśī should twice eavesdrop on the king, and this time the eavesdropping, although Urvaśī is overjoyed and wishes to bring it to an end, is longer drawn out and the union of the lovers postponed, because the queen, for whom both the king and the audience are waiting, appears on the scene.

> The queen comes with her court. The king takes her hand and seats her beside him. Urvaśī notices her queenly dignity. Citralekhā praises Urvaśī for her lack of jealousy of the queen. Urvaśī sees how highly the king respects his queen. But Citralekhā, worldly-wise, remarks that only those who love other women are so polite to their wives. The queen begins the moon rites, in which she honours the king instead of the moon, presents the Vidūshaka with sweetmeats and expresses her approval of his new love to the king. The Vidūshaka says to himself: "When the fish escapes him the fisherman thinks this is good for his soul, for he does not then need to kill!" (Europeans speak of sour grapes.) . . . But aloud he asks the queen if she can continue to love such a husband. She assures him that she only wants her husband's happiness. Purūravas declares himself to be her slave, whom she can give away to whomever she will (he should have said—to whatever woman). He assures her that he is not as she thinks. She replies that this may or may not be so. The sacrificial rites come to an end and she goes.

It is difficult to repeat here all the witty remarks in this complicated scene. The king twists and turns in an extremely unworthy manner. Urvaśī shows herself free of jealousy, for she is sure of victory. The queen controls her jealousy, for she is already defeated, but she sees that the king preserves the correct forms. The Vidūshaka and Citralekhā speak out what healthy human understanding would make of these things if it had to judge of such courtly entanglements. Old Indian custom required absolute submission of the slave-like wife to her husband's sidestepping. Śūdraka, in his drama, showed the wife of Cārudatta as even more submissive in this respect; she is ready to give up her last jewels to help her husband, and he nowhere indicates that she suffered inwardly over his love for the harlot Vasantasenā. Kālidāsa did indicate the queen's suffering, and in this he is more human and poetically greater than Śūdraka.

The queen forgives the king and is tolerant toward the harlot, who in her turn recognises the queen's dignity, but still is not jealous of her. Indra sent his harlot to the king and left her with him for several years. The king is enamoured of the "new" love, but at the same time full of respect for his queen. He assures them both that he is their slave. Only the queen was to be allowed to hand him over as a slave to the harlot. On reflexion this general tolerance is not particularly attractive for Germans. But the poet has described it in such a way as to hide its ugliness, since the atmosphere produced here is not conducive to reflexion. He draws his audience into his spell, and they tremble for the new lover, as if he were not merely an old Indian despot to whom, by the grace of the god, a fairy hastens—so that there can in fact be no danger of a mishap.

> Urvaśī cannot command her heart, even when she sees that the king loves his wife. The king asks the Vidūshaka if the queen has gone far enough away. He begins his love lament again. He longs for his beloved to come and place

her hands over his eyes. She does so. She excuses herself for coming, saying that the queen has given her to him. Citralekhā begs the king to take care that Urvaśī shall never regret coming down from heaven. Purūravas assures her that he is her slave, belongs to her, and that she does not have to share him with any other wife. The Vidūshaka asks how anyone could long to be in heaven, where there is nothing to eat. Citralekhā returns to heaven and the Vidūshaka leads the happy pair into the palace.

The king learns nothing of Bharata's and Indra's part in furthering his happiness. He does not ask why his beloved has come. He is happy to have emerged successfully, if in a somewhat undignified manner, from the interview with the queen. Despite the moon rites, nothing of the beauty of the moonlit night enters into this tense scene. Kālidāsa has not made use of this opportunity. He obviously did not wish to distract attention from the rapid movement of the scene with any moonlight romance. Here he differs from Śūdraka, who causes Vasantasenā to hasten through a night thunderstorm to the house of her beloved and then happily enter the sleeping chamber, without clouding the noble pair's happiness by jealousy.

This third act is the centre of the five-act drama of Urvaśī. It corresponds to the fourth act of "Śakuntalā", the bride's farewell to the hermit settlement and her departure for the home of her royal husband. The fifth of the ten acts of the drama of Vasantasenā is the corresponding one; the action turns to tragedy in the sixth. Urvaśī, like Vasantasenā, abandons herself to her lover. In both dramas neither the man nor the woman asks for more at the moment than to still their love. Both harlots become the permanent wives of their lovers only at the end. Kālidāsa played out on the stage the unhappy separation of the lovers in Act V of "Śakuntalā", but Purūravas' separation from Urvaśī is only mentioned at the beginning of Act IV. The poet does not here show the cause of their separation on the stage, but lets Citralekhā recount it to a playmate.

> In the prologue to Act IV Citralekhā tells the apsaras Sahajanyā how Urvaśī, through her magic power, took her lover with her into the wonderful Himalayan mountains and how Purūravas once looked at a genie maiden (a Vidyadhari) who was playing in the sand, longer than was agreeable to Urvaśī. She was not to be reconciled and rushed away till she reached the wood of Kumāra[109], and was there turned into a liana, for no woman was allowed to set foot in the grove of this god. Day and night Purūravas wandered about looking for her in this wood. The dialogue begins and ends with a strophe sung by a swan lamenting her lost love.

Purūravas has not completely held to his promise to love only Urvaśī, who loves him deeply, is extremely exacting (as Sahajanyā remarks) and is moved all too quickly to anger. She was able to accept his respect for the older queen (especially as she hastened to the distant mountains with him), but she could not reconcile herself to his staring at a young girl. Urvaśī has a fiery temperament. As a harlot she cannot bear to let her temporary happiness be clouded. The poet does not reproach her with this, any more than the audience. Kālidāsa allowed her as a harlot to suffer much more than Śūdraka allowed his Vasantasenā to suffer, for nothing of this kind happens in his drama. Kālidāsa made the vacillating king wound first his queen, on account of Urvaśī, and then Urvaśī on account of a strange girl. The queen as a mature woman, gradually trained to forbearance in her high position, had tried to approach her infatuated husband again and then to reconcile herself to his inconstancy. The heavenly harlot Urvaśī rushes away in a far more impetuous way, and is severely punished, if one looks at it in this way. At any rate, in her transformed state as a liana in the war god's grove, she can do nothing towards a reunion with her repentant lover. The poet need not go further into the question whether she would now permit her newly won lover to take another and a younger love.

Here a further comparison with Śakuntalā can be made. Urvaśī is condemned to sad immobility as a liana. Śakuntalā wanders away to a heavenly hermit settlement and there lives through the birth and happy early years of her son. Śakuntalā was only to blame for the sorrows of separation in so far as she had loved her husband so much that she had overlooked Durvāsas. But Urvaśī, through her impatience and fiery temperament, is much more to blame. Citralekhā expresses the opinion that Urvaśī was confused by Bharata's curse into entering the forbidden grove. She believes, it seems, that Urvaśī would otherwise have remembered that it was forbidden. But according to the poet her confusion was actually the result of her impatience and not of her mistake during the heavenly theatrical performance.

The beginning of the separation is merely related in the prologue to Act IV and the separation and its end are the subject of the act itself.

In "Śakuntalā" on the other hand the whole period of the separation is played out in Acts V, VI and VII. In both dramas the man's grief is shown first.

Purūravas wanders through the grove of the gods and asks trees and animals whether they have seen his beloved.

This part of the drama has been described as operatic. Dancing and singing, the king speaks a long monologue, driven almost out of his mind by grief. He wants to throw a clump of earth at a cloud, for he thinks it is a demon who has carried off his beloved. He talks to the animals, who cannot answer him. He is far wilder than Dushyanta, who tries to drive off the painted bee in the corresponding passage in Act VI of "Śakuntalā". He is also far more inconsolable than the spirit, who sends his message through a lifeless cloud. He can best be compared with Rāma, who wanders through the jungle and in his grief inquires of Sītā from the trees and animals, after she was carried off by Rāvana[110]. Rāma has of course his faithful brother Lakshmaṇa, who at last warns him not to lose control of himself like a mere mortal. But Kālidāsa does not bring the Vidūshaka into this scene. He would not have conformed to the lyrical lament of this act, which far surpasses Aja's love lament for the dead Indumatī in the "Line of Raghu". The pair had left the Vidūshaka behind in the palace when they fled to the mountains. Many regard this scene as one of the poet's most exquisite, but it cannot be denied that this uncontrolled and somewhat unmanly lament of the hero Purūravas appears faintly artificial, exaggerated and theatrical, although Germans are accustomed from their opera to moving love laments.

> At last the king finds a talisman which helps him to discover Urvaśī. He embraces the liana and Urvaśī is transformed back to her fairy form. She begs him to forgive her. She tells of her transformation, and he of the talisman, which he places as an ornament on her brow. She urges him to return home, lest his people should blame her for his neglect of his kingly duties. They fly back on a cloud to Allahabad.

This was a frequent motif in old Indian lyrical poetry—the comparison of a liana twining itself round a tree with a girl twining herself round her lover. Thus the king embraces the liana because she resembles his loved one, and it was in fact his loved one. In Act II of "Śakuntalā" the Vidūshaka urges Dushyanta to have done with hunting and to get back to his kingly duties. Purūravas does not suggest to Urvaśī that they should linger for a few days more of love in the romantic forest region. The poet, however, does not let him give the reason why he immediately follows her suggestion. Perhaps he is afraid of another separation here in this strange land which has grown sinister to him? The couple do not speak plainly here. The king does not seek to justify himself for his lingering look at the strange girl, nor do they promise to mend their ways. Urvaśī still addresses her beloved ceremoniously as "great king". Does the poet imply that she, as a harlot, owes it to the king to ask forgiveness for her jealousy, but that a promise of more patience in future would not be in character and would not have been expected of her by the king; and on the other hand, did the king have no obligation to promise her, a harlot, greater faithfulness? Or did the poet wish to avoid such discussion after an act of such moving and operatic quality? In any case, the brevity of this last scene needs some explanation.

> Act V begins with a short monologue by the Vidūshaka, telling how the king, safely returned, conducts the government; he lacks nothing but a son. He now carries out a ritual bath with the queen at the junction of the Ganges and Yamunā rivers.

Purūravas is again the strong king who fulfils his religious duties with his queen. The place where these two rivers meet is today still regarded as a place of healing. Hundreds of thousands of the faithful meet here at festivals.

> Behind the stage a voice is heard: "Alas! a vulture has stolen my talisman." The king appears, a hunchback[111] among his following points out a vulture circling high above them. Purūravas does not know what to do. The Vidūshaka advises him to kill the vulture pitilessly, but in the meantime it has flown away while a bodyguard had gone to fetch the king's bow and arrow. The king sends an order to the city commandant to shoot at the vulture when it alights for the night in its accustomed tree. But shortly afterwards

a chamberlain brings him the talisman with an arrow, on which the king reads the name Prince Āyus, son of Purūravas and Urvaśī.

Thus the king finds his son, of whom he had known nothing. Dushyanta found his son Bharata as a conqueror of lions, and Purūravas found a protector and hunter in his son. The poet introduces Urvaśī's talisman in order to make this scene possible and had caused her to lay it aside on the occasion of the ritual bathing. So it is clear that she was present as well as the queen, although the Vidūshaka had not found it necessary to mention her. In order to introduce Āyus as a hunter there had to be some delay, and here Kālidāsa let Purūravas enquire after the vulture and call for his bow and arrow at some length. Not the father—hero and conqueror of demons—but the unknown son was to kill the thief and return the talisman to the king's beloved. As this scene goes it shows Purūravas in a very unheroic light, especially in view of the beginning of the drama, where he immediately determines to give battle to the demon and robber of women. The poet did not let this opportunity pass of showing the king in an unmanly light. With his genius he might easily have found another solution here if he had so wished.

> The king is happy to have a son, but does not understand why Urvaśī has not told him about the boy. The Vidūshaka suggests that she did not want him to neglect her as she grew older. But the king takes this as a joke.

And it is meant as a joke, but the Brahman's humour is sometimes very apt, for this is a very human judgment. But an Urvaśī simply does not grow old.

> A hermit woman appears with a youth—Āyus. She tells how Urvaśī had given him into her charge immediately after his birth. The hermit Cyavana had instructed him and taught him to be a warrior. But on this day he had broken the rules of the hermits and kiled a bird. Cyavana therefore sends him back to Urvaśī. The king sends for Urvaśī, who is amazed to see her son, whom she had not watched grow up. The son meets his mother for the first time. The king gives Urvaśī, as the mother of his son, half his seat. The hermit woman goes away and Āyus wishes to go with her, but the king tells him that he is now to begin a new life, and Āyus then asks the hermit woman to send him his pet peacock.

This first family meeting is cool. Perhaps the poet wishes to suggest that Urvaśī, the heavenly harlot, is not like a human mother. The audience knows that she has divided feelings, for she has given up her son for years in order to be with her lover. But on the other hand Kālidāsa does not yet indicate that she realises the tragedy inherent in the situation. His intention is thus not clear to us.

> The king rejoices over his son. Urvaśī then remembers her banishment from heaven and weeps. She tells Purūravas that she was only permitted to remain with him until he had seen his son. The king falls unconscious, wakes, laments, over his fate, thinks of placing Āyus on the throne and retiring as a hermit

to the jungle. He causes his council of ministers to prepare everything for Āyus' coronation, but then comes Nārada, heavenly musician, and Urvaśī brings water etc. to the king for his reception of an important guest. Nārada brings Indra's massage that Purūravas must not retire as a hermit, for a new war between gods and demons threatens, and Urvaśī is permitted to remain with him until his death. Nārada then anoints Āyus as heir to the throne. Urvaśī takes her son's hand and leads him to his "older mother", the queen, and the king accompanies them.

Urvaśī does not fall unconscious like the king When he laments over his fate, she only repoaches him softly that she does not return happily to heaven after accomplishing her task on earth and bearing a son. Purūravas does not accept her reproaches, but neither does he offer any objection to her renewed dependence on the king of the gods. Urvaśī thinks first of the noble queen, who is thus mentioned again at the end of the drama. As mother of the royal heir, Urvaśī now has an established position beside the king, even though she is not queen. In Śūdraka's drama the harlot Vasantasenā is allowed to leave the caste of the harlots so as to be the honourable wife of the merchant Cārudatta[112]. Kālidāsa did not undertake any similar action in the case of the heavenly harlot Urvaśī, for she would return to her old place in heaven after her temporary union with the earthly king.

Urvaśī's fate in love is similar to that of Śakuntalā and also, in essentials, with that of Pārvatī, the loved one in the "Cloud Messenger" or Sītā. The poet deals ever and again with the theme of love and separation; again and again he brings about a happy reunion. But when he repeatedly developed the basic theme of love in new form, he did it because he wished to deal with new women characters. He loved the impetuous virgin Pārvatī as well as the shy Śakuntalā—brought up amongst hermits in the romantic jungle—but he also loved the harlot Urvaśī, the passionate woman fighting for her lover, who could not be a genuine wife and who always had to live partly under a shadow of disapproval.

But Kālidāsa also enjoyed showing how different men behave towards those they love: Śiva, the widow who loved again; Dushyanta, the somewhat idealised king, and Purūravas, the heroic weakling who was permitted to keep his harlot as reward for his victory over the demons. These loving couples stand out clearly against a background of minor figures, but Urvaśī alone has to deal with a weak, childless, ageing and merely human antagonism in the figure of the noble queen. This may also have been a reason why the poet felt the need to treat once more of love, separation and reunion—although it cannot be stated with certainty that Kālidāsa actually did compose his works in the order in which they are described here.

9. Mālavikā and Agnimitra

In Pārvatī Kālidāsa described a loving mountain goddess, in Śakuntalā the hermit maiden, in Urvaśī the heavenly harlot. In the drama of Mālavikā he sings of the love of a slave girl, for this she was during the time of the drama, although originally a princess. Thus for this charming treatment of his favourite theme of love, Kālidāsa did not use a mythical, but rather an historical background, a court and events which took place about 500 years before his time. What he knew of those times, what he learnt from extant accounts and what he himself added, is not yet clear. It appears as though he worked many original ideas into the drama; nevertheless all historians of old India still use this drama as one of the few sources of information on this period.

At that time—in the first half of the second century B.C.—the kingdom which had united almost all of northern India and a considerable part of southern India under the mighty Maurya dynasty had fallen to pieces. The last of the Mauryas, according to the Purānas, was defeated by his own army commander, Pushyamitra, who was said to have been a Brahman of the Bhāradvāja[113] Brahman line and the founder of the Śunga dynasty of northern India, more accurately of Magadha. Pushyamitra is said to have reigned for 36 years, between 184 and 148 B.C.[114].

His son was Agnimitra, who reigned eight years; Agnimitra's son Vasujyeṣṭha ruled seven years, his grandson eight years and so on[115]. These kings reigned in Vidiśā[116]—somewhat east of Ujjain—or in the old capital of Pātaliputra. A Buddhist source claims that Pushyamitra was a bitter enemy of Buddhism[117]. Since the Maurya king Aśoka was a pronounced supporter of the Buddhists, it is quite possible that the usurper, a Brahman, might present this contrast. In the neighbourhood of Vidiśā there were a great number of splendid Buddhist holy places, erected at about that time and, according to inscriptions, with funds donated by single persons and guilds[118]. It is not clear what attitude the Brahman dynasty took towards them, but there is no proof that the Brahman kings had anything to do with the ruined state in which these buildings now stand. This is all the information we have about these early Śunga kings.

According to Kālidāsa the position was that Pushyamitra was at the time engaged in a victorious campaign against the Greeks in the north. His son Agnimitra presumably acted as regent in Vidiśā for his absent father. Our poet considers Vasumitra as Agnimitra's son—not as his grandson (as the Puranas have it). Vasumitra accompanies his grandfather on his military campaign and acquits himself as a hero. It is certain that at this time Greeks ruled in the Punjab and in places far east of it. Campaigns towards the east into the Ganges valley are reported led by Demetrius and Menander and it cannot yet be said with certainty which of the two Pushyamitra defeated in our drama[119].

The kingdom of Vidarbha adjoined that of Pushyamitra in the south. After Aśoka's death the Maurya kingdom collapsed and the south was among the areas which made themselves independent[120].

Kālidāsa mentions king Yajñasena, his brother-in-law and his cousin Mādhavasena in Vidarbha. None of these three are mentioned in other sources; they may therefore be inventions. According to Kālidāsa, the brother-in-law belonged to the Maurya line, had therefore married a sister of Yajñasena or his sister was married to Yajñasena. This king of Vidarbha therefore belonged to that family of the Maurya which had been dethroned by Pushyamitra, and was thus an enemy of Pushyamitra and Agnimitra. His cousin Mādhavasena, however, sided with Agnimitra and wished to give him his youngest sister Mālavikā in marriage. Yajñasena tried to prevent this. And here we have the kernel of the drama which Kālidāsa brings before his audience in five acts. It is not inconsistent that the king of Vidiśā had to fight against enemies both in the north and in the south. It is perfectly possible that Kālidāsa got his information from some historical soucre which is not yet available to us, or he may have invented both characters.

At the end of the drama Pushyamitra wishes to celebrate his victory with a horse sacrifice; his battles in the north are a preliminary to this old rite. This has been taken as proof that Pushyamitra as a Brahman was opposed to the Buddhists (as the abovementioned Buddhist reported), and it is suggested that the Buddhists may have called upon the Greeks as strangers to help them[121]. But there is no supporting evidence of this in the drama. The Buddhist hermit woman Kauśikī, at any rate, plays a very important part at Agnimitra's court.

> Kālidāsa opens his drama with a prologue by the play-house director and his assistant, from which we learn that the piece was to be performed at a spring festival. The assistant suggests that a play by a famous old dramatist like Bhāsa or Saumilla should be performed, rather than one by a modern poet like Kālidāsa. The director replies that not every old play is good simply because it is old, and not every new play should be criticised because it is new. Experts judge plays on their merits and only stupid people base their opinions on those of others.

This dialogue does not necessarily mean, as some suggest[122], that this drama was the work of a young poet. It merely shows that he may have had to struggle for recognition, did not win through easily and himself judged older works severely. If the plays attributed to Bhāsa are really his, and older than those of Kālidāsa, then we can support Kālidāsa's judgment. Bhāsa's love stories—that of king Udayana for instance—cannot bear comparison with Kālidāsa's "Mālavikā" either in human treatment or in poetic power.

In this polemical and slightly angry-sounding prologue there is no place for lyrical passages such as those in the prologue to Śakuntalā[123].

The first act opens with a dialogue between two women servants (i.e. slave girls)[124] of queen Dhāriṇī:

Vakulāvalikā is to enquire of the dancing teacher Gaṇadāsa whether his pupil Mālavikā is making progress. Kaumudikā brings from the seal cutter a beautiful ring engraved with a likeness of a snake to the queen. She wonders how the king came to see Mālavikā, who is separated from the others by her dancing lessons. He has seen her picture beside that of the queen and has inquired about her. The little princess Vasulakshmī revealed Mālavikā's name and she is now kept purposely far apart from the king.

The audience is thus confided in, that this is to be a story of the king's love for Mālavikā; (the awakening of love through a portrait is a frequent theme in popular literature[125]), and it is also indicated that the queen's snake ring will play some part—although this does not happen before Act IV.

The dancing master appears, answers enquiries with enthusastic reports about his talented pupil, and asks in his turn about her past. Vakulāvalikā tells him that a brother-in-law of the king, a lower caste brother of the queen Dhāriṇī, had sent Mālavikā as a present to his sister from the frontier near Vidarbha, where he was in command of a fortress. She hastens to Mālavikā to tell her of her teacher's praise.

The teacher assumes from the noble bearing of his pupil Mālavikā that she is a special person—a hint which is only fully explained to the audience at the end of the drama. The first queen, Dhariṇi, has a brother of lower caste; she herself is the daughter of a king, thus of the Kshatriya noble caste, but her father had a son by a lower caste wife[126]. We should call him Dhāriṇī's half-brother. But this brother-in-law of the king, like the brother-in-law in Śakuntalā (the police officer in Act VI) fulfils his duties honourably, just as his sister, Queen Dhāriṇī, also plays a perfectly dignified role.

After this begins the first act. King Agnimitra is engaged in state business. His minister reads him a letter from the king of Vidarbha, Yajñasena. Agnimitra had demanded the release of Yajñasena's first cousin on his father's side—Mādhavasena. Mādhavasena had been on his way to Agnimitra when he was taken prisoner by Yajñasena's frontier commander, with his wife and sister. Yajñasena now wishes to make a counter-demand—that Agnimitra set free Yajñasena's brother-in-law and adviser, a Maurya[127]. In addition he wrote that Mādhavasena's sister had disappeared and that he would seek for her.

These facts are presented very briefly, but the educated old Indian spectators would have understood them quite well. They would probably guess, too, that the lost sister is none other than Mālavikā. But this question is only cleared up in the last act of the drama.

The king immediately orders his brother-in-law Vīrasena (the above-mentioned half-brother of queen Dhāriṇī) to prepare to wipe out Vidarbha—Agnimitra's natural enemy. Only later does he ask his minister's opinion. The minister, in confirming the king's decision, remarks that according to state teachings, a king who is not yet firmly established should be easy to defeat. The king expresses his agreement with this argument.

Thus knowledgeable old Indians got a true impression of this king. From the dialogue between the queen's two servants it is evident that he is weak and fears her, and from the foregoing scene it is also clear that he is easily angered, impetuous and given to making quick decisions without consulting his ministers or state teachings—only later looking for justification of his actions. He is a despot who allows himself to be governed by passion, love and anger. There were certainly all too many such men, but state law did not approve of them; it demanded self-control from kings and that they should follow the necessities of government and not personal passion. Only the state law teacher Bharadvaja, frequently subjected to justifiable criticism by Kauṭalya, agreed in principle to usurpation of a throne[128] and praised these two passions as ornaments of the full-blooded man and ruler. Kālidāsa, well-informed student of state law, has thus consciously portrayed his king Agnimitra so that his educated audience can sense his critical intention.

> The minister retires and the Vidūshaka appears. The king calls the Vidūshaka in his own mind "his further adviser in other matters" and asks him whether he has thought of a plan to help him see Mālavikā in person—and not only in a picture. The Vidūshaka whispers his plan in the king's ear.

The audience is to be held in suspense.

> Sounds of argument come from behind the stage. The king guesses that the plan is being put into action. His chamberlain reports that his dancing master Haradatta and the queen's dancing master Gaṇadāsa wish the king to settle a dispute. They approach the king humbly. He shall say which is the better teacher of dancing. Only he is a skilled judge of their art. The king, however, calls for the queen and her learned companion, the Buddhist hermit woman Kauśikī, whom the Vidūshaka cheekily calls a helper in love matters. She persuades the queen, who is not in favour of a dancing competition, that she has nothing to lose by it.

The Vidūshaka enjoys a sort of clown's immunity. No-one takes offence at his impertinence. Hermit women were suitable persons to bring lovers together, according to Bhavabhūti's drama of "Mālatī and Mādhava". But none of those assembled at the court were supposed to guess what the audience understood from the Vidūshaka's words—that Kauśikī had been confided in, and was prepared to bring the king together with Mālavikā. And neither the audience nor the Vidūshaka himself guessed the very good reason why Kauśikī was willing to do this. This is only explained in the last act. The king will have been clear about her, however, since the Vidūshaka had whispered his plan to him, and this was the reason why he had invited Kauśikī to watch the competition.

This is the reason for her persuasive talk with the queen, who certainly guesses there is a trick afoot to present Mālavikā as a dancing pupil to the king. But she does not venture to speak about it. The hermit woman pretends the queen fears losing the dancing competition through the inferiority of Gaṇadāsa, her dancing master, and thus gives the queen a hint as to how she should protest against the competition.

> The king appoints the hermit woman as judge, since neither he nor the queen is impartial. She proposes not to examine the dancing masters themselves but their pupils, and the king agrees to this, while the queen raises objections. She tries first to persuade Gaṇadāsa to withdraw, first because he only causes the king more exertion, and then because his pupil is only a beginner. But ambition eggs Gaṇadāsa on. The queen then suggests the competition should take place in the presence of the hermit woman alone, but Kauśikī refuses to sit in judgment alone. Finally the queen allows Gaṇadāsa to act as director of his pupil, but makes it clear that she is mistress of her servants. "And mine too!" the king adds.

The unfortunate queen is defeated for the time being. The Vidūshaka has set the two dancing masters at logger-heads, possibly confided his plan to Gaṇadāsa, and has the hermit woman and the king on his side too. The poet has conjured up perfectly the atmosphere of the court, through lightly pointed hints in the conversation. The Vidūshaka plays a much more important role in this drama of the historical king and his love intrigue with a slave girl than in his other dramas. This uneducated Brahman works here hand in hand with the better educated, Sanscrit-speaking Buddhist hermit woman. Both help the lovers—the king and the slave girl—to win out against the jealousy of the queen. Old Indian audiences certainly got plenty of fun out of this, and we also enjoy this glimpse of a despot's court. In wrath the king can send out his army against a neighbour state, but in the palace itself he—the king—is the queen's slave, although he hopes to gratify his love for the slave girl whom he at first only desired to see.

> The hermit woman decides that the two dancing masters shall cause their pupils to perform a certain dance, and insists that the girls must show their beauty without robes. If he conducts his political affairs as cleverly as this, says the queen ironically, the king will certainly be successful. He assures her that he has not engineered all this. A drum announces that the dancing masters are ready. The company moves towards the dancing hall and the king is in such haste that he offends the queen and the Vidūshaka warns him to calm himself. The king says he cannot help himself.

Kauśikī helps the king in a positively shameless way. How the audience must have laughed at the "ascetic" woman! Could Kālidāsa have let his Śakuntalā take part in such a dance? The queen's ironical remark expresses what everyone felt. In politics the king had acted in anger, without thought or diplomacy, but he allows the Vidūshaka to arrange his love affair with perfect diplomacy. He does not lie directly when he says he has not arranged anything, but he clearly has a guilty conscience in connection with his wife, like Purūravas in the presence of Urvaśī, while Kālidāsa does not place his idealised Dushyanta in any such awkward situation. His Śiva was even monogamous.

> Act II shows Mālavikā's dance. The king is dying of impatience, whispers in the Vidūshaka's ear and admires in long-drawn-out thoughts the beauty of Mālavikā, who sings a strophe set by Kauśikī and dances to it—a strophe full of love longings of the mythical beauty Śarmishṭhā. The Vidūshaka tells the king that Mālavikā has thus practically offered herself to him through this song.

According to the Mahābhārata[129] Śarmishṭhā was the daughter of the demon king Vrshaparvan. But Devayānī was the daughter of his priest Śukra. They were jealous of each other's rank and the princess pushed the priest's daughter into a dry well. King Yayāti came past the well, rescued Devayānī and returned home. Her father, Śukra, however, demanded that the king hand over the princess and a thousand maidens to his daughter as slaves, and this was done. (The story is to show that the Brahman's stand is higher than royalty).

As she wandered once through the woods with her maidens, Yayāti chanced to pass that way, asked about the two beautiful girls, and Devayānī asked him to be her friend and husband. Yayāti objected that he as Kshatriya was not allowed to wed a Brahman, but only one of equal or lower caste. Devayānī's father, however, was agreeable, and he gave Śarmishṭhā too, on condition that Yayāti did not call her to his bed. Later, when Devayānī grew up, she bore Yayāti a son, called Yadu, from whom Kṛshna was descended. Śarmishṭhā also grew up and sought his love. He agreed after initial hesitation, and she also bore him a son, but Śarmishṭhā's son was called Puru, and from him were descended the Pāṇḍava, the main heroes of the Mahābhārata.

So the hermit woman let Mālavikā, slave but princess by birth, sing the enslaved princess Śarmishṭhā's song of love. Śarmishṭhā loved a king and could hardly hope for the fulfillment of her love. Mālavikā is perhaps not yet in love, but she must now act love before the infatuated king. Clever onlookers could conclude from the fate of Śarmishṭhā that Mālavikā's fate was also to be a happy one. But it is not necessary to assume that Kālidāsa moulded his whole drama on the famous old epic story of Śarmishṭhā; such love affairs between masters and slaves were certainly usual.

> The king thinks that Mālavikā has only hidden her love for him behind the mask of Śarmishṭhā because she is afraid of her mistress the queen. Mālavikā is about to withdraw, but the Vidūshaka finds fault with her and asks the hermit woman what she thinks. She and the king praise her dancing master, the queen congratulates him too, but the Vidūshaka declares that he as Brahman ought to be saluted first. All laugh at this joke, Mālavikā laughs too, and the king admires her even more. The Vidūshaka wishes to present her with one of the queen's armbands, but the queen refuses and tells Gaṇadāsa to take his pupil away. The Vidūshaka cannot detain Mālavikā any longer for the king's pleasure. The king is ready to watch the second dancing master's test, but it is already midday and the Vidūshaka begs the queen to allow him to satisfy his hunger as soon as possible.

Thus ends this court scene of enjoyment of the art of dancing—actually a scene of love intrigue. The king is burning with passion for his new love and assumes that she feels the like for him (and the poet, through the perfection of the girl's singing, hints that this may be so!) The Vidūshaka helps him to avoid watching the other dancing pupil, and is to help still more to bring the impatient king in closer touch with Mālavikā. As intriguer the Vidūshaka is one of the main characters in the drama, and at the same time a clown who loves eating.

Act III begins like Act I—and later like Act V—with a prologue in the form of a dialogue between two servants. In Acts III and IV of "Śakuntalā" Kālidāsa had informed the audience through the conversation of two similar lovely maidens about what had happened in the meantime, and this form is certainly employed here to bring a certain symmetry into the construction of the drama as a whole.

> A girl servant of the hermit woman is sent to fetch a lemon which she is to present to the king[130], and she talks here with a girl gardener who is on her way to report to the queen that an aśoka tree is about to bloom. They discuss how the king and Mālavikā have fallen in love and how they repine.

The lemon plays no further part, but the blossoming tree appears again later.

> Act III opens with a dialogue between the love-sick king and the Vidūshaka, who vainly tries to comfort him with the news that he is in touch with Vakulāvalikā, the queen's servant and Mālavikā's friend[131], but that the girl is very closely watched by the queen. He suggests that the king should fulfil his promise to take his second wife Irāvatī swinging, but the king is not in the right mood for this, for his heart longs only for Mālavikā and he fears that the clever Irāvatī will guess this. But the Vidūshaka warns him not to break off with all the palace women at once. He leads the king to the swing, and on the way they both enjoy the beauties of the park.

The Vidūshaka has no time to tell the king the details of his arrangements with Vakulāvalikā, for the poet introduces a new hindrance in Irāvatī. Dushyanta had avoided complications with his two wives—politely and playfully—and this was in any case not shown on the stage. Purūravas had serious difficulties with his old queen. Agnimitra has here to deal with two queens, with Dhārinī, mother of the heir to the throne and Mālavikā's mistress and with Irāvatī, who is to be regarded as the younger, more beautiful and most recent favourite, just as in the Rāmāyana the older queen Kausalyā was for a time put aside by king Daśaratha in favour of the younger Kaikeyī.

> Mālavikā then appears and laments her love. The queen has sent her to touch the aśoka tree with her foot, since she herself, through the Vidūshaka's carelessness, has had a fall from the swing and hurt her foot. If the aśoka tree blossoms within five days, the queen has promised Mālavikā that she will fulfil one wish for her. Mālavikā awaits Vakulāvalikā, who is to decorate her feet.

This tree cult, that a woman had to touch the tree in order to bring it to blossom, was an old custom. Perhaps the Vidūshaka had not quite unintentionally caused the queen to injure her foot in the swing, and perhaps it was Vakulāvalikā who had persuaded the queen to entrust this rite to the beautiful Mālavikā and to make her this promise. Such promises were not uncommon, but none the less this one was imprudent, for it now rested with Mālavikā to choose her wish and the queen would be obliged to fulfil it. She felt herself strong enough to make this sweeping promise. In the case of king Daśaratha and his Kaikeyī a similar promise had dire results, for she had demanded Rāma's banishment.

> The king and his confidant listen to Mālavikā's lament, but the king is not convinced that she loves him. Vakulāvalikā appears and the Vidūshaka assures the king that he will now hear how she carries out her task and delivers his love message. While the two men watch the girl decorating Mālavikā's feet, queen Irāvatī appears with her servant. She is slightly intoxicated[132] and hopes that this becomes her. She wants the king to swing her. Her servant espies the two girls and explains that they are busy with the aśoka tree. But Irāvatī suspects something behind this.

One should imagine the stage occupied by three separate groups—in the centre the two girls, one wing occupied by the men and the other by the young queen and her servant. As there were no separating partitions, the actors had to show by gesture whom they saw and whom not. The poet certainly had a big success with this complicated scene.

> Vakulāvalikā tells how she has learnt the art of foot decoration and painting the soles of feet red from the king himself, and at the same time she delivers her message of love to the doubting Mālavikā. Mālavikā thereupon admits her love for the king, who is overjoyed to hear her confession.

Up to this point the scene can be compared with the similar scene in Act III of "Śakuntalā": the man desires a confession of love from the queen's slave. He obviously does not wish to win her merely in submission to a master's will.

> He comes forward and the Vidūshaka pretends to frighten the girls by accusing Mālavikā of immodesty in touching the aśoka tree. Both girls are covered with confusion and Mālavikā is frightened. Vakulāvalikā knows what is behind this; but Mālavikā, as a slave girl, has no right to perform this rite, which is the queen's prerogative.
>
> Vakulāvalikā tells of the queen's order and the king turns with loving politeness to Mālavikā. She asks her friend to go with her to the queen, but the king detains her and begs her to give him the joy she gives the aśoka tree in touching it. Irāvatī rushes angrily out of her hiding-place. The Vidūshaka advises her to retire. The two girls flee. Irāvatī reproaches the king for his infidelity, but he denies that he has any connection with Mālavikā and insists that he is only waiting to swing Irāvatī. She turns away, but her girdle slips and hinders her tread. She picks up the girdle and prepares to strike the king with it, but he holds her hand fast and begs her on his knees to forgive him—her slave. She rushes away and he follows her, to be reconciled.

Thus the first brief talk of love ends quite differently from that in Act I of "Śakuntalā", broken off as it is by the jealous and hot-tempered former favourite. Agnimitra is put in an embarrassing situation. Two points about the king are brought out in this central act: that he understands the art of painting the soles of women's feet, and that he prevents his wife in the nick of time from striking him with her girdle. In the last song of "The Line of Raghu", however, Kālidāsa describes how the decadent Agnivarna painted the soles of his wife's feet, but lust caused his glance to waver and he painted badly[133]. He deceived his wives so frequently that they tied him up with their girdles[134]. Despite all differences, the Agnimitra of this drama does faintly resemble the miserable Agnivarna. On the other hand the wrathful and drunken Irāvatī behaves absolutely without self-control in comparison with Purūravas' injured queen, and can rather be compared with the jealous Urvaśī. In any case, Kālidāsa has plainly enough pictured life at the Śunga court of Vidiśā as extremely wanton. Mālavikā alone, the lovely young slave girl, stands out in her shy purity, and it is hard to understand how she could have loved this weakling king. He must have been very handsome[135].

> At the beginning of Act IV the Vidūshaka tells the king that Kauśikī has told him how Irāvatī has betrayed his love for the slave girl to the queen, and how Mālavikā and her friend Vakulāvalikā have been imprisoned in the treasure cellar. Here the two poor girls, in chains, cannot see the sun. The woman guarding their dungeon is not allowed to release the two unless shown the queen's signet ring. The king's sly friend whispers a plan in his ear.

The king has in the meantime been unable to appease Irāvatī, and now his beautiful slave girl has to suffer bitterly for his impulsive behaviour. He still does not dare to use his kingly power to help her, but continues to rely on his love minister's tricks.

> According to their plan, the king goes to queen Dhāriṇī who is listening to stories told by Kauśikī. Jayasenā, the king's door-keeper, hears of the plan from the Vidūshaka. No sooner have the king and queen greeted each other than the Vidūshaka comes moaning that a snake has bitten him. They take him hastily to a doctor, the doorkeeper returns in haste and asks that a search be made for a ring with a snake seal, since only magic can help the Vidūshaka. The queen gives up her ring at once. The doorkeeper quickly reports that the Vidūshaka is saved and at the same time announces the minister with important business. The queen retires with the hermit woman and her following.

In the haste of departure the noble queen quite forgets to ask for her ring—the ring which the servant had fetched in the prologue to Act I. There had been no mention then, however, that the Vidūshaka had noticed it and would thus make such good use of it later in his plot.

> The Vidūshaka reports the success of his trick to the king. He has shown the ring to the dungeon guardian and declared that the king has ordered the

> release of all prisoners, to ward off misfortune. He leads the king to Mālavikā in the park.

There is no further mention of ministers or government business. So the doorkeeper also lied on the Vidūshaka's orders.

> The king and his friend watch Mālavikā and her friend in a pavilion. The two girls throw themselves down in greeting before a picture of the court. But Mālavikā sees that in the picture the king only has eyes for Irāvatī. Vakulāvalikā explains that Irāvatī is the King's favourite. Mālavikā rages, turns away from the picture—then looks at it again. Vakulāvalikā urges her to go on raging, but Mālavikā declares that she would rather forget her anger for a space.

Kālidāsa is a master in the portrayal of such scenes of infatuated maidens. Mālavikā is so upset that she forgets that this is only a picture—like Dushyanta in Act VI.

> The king comes forward and the girls fall at his feet. Both lovers are shy and awkward. Their friends encourage them and make an excuse to leave them together, saying they will protect them from discovery. The Vidūshaka falls asleep and Vakulāvalikā wanders farther away.
>
> Fearful of the queen, Mālavikā does not dare approach the king. When he tells her not to be afraid she replies reproachfully [136] that she has seen how he himself is afraid of the queen, her mistress. But he attributes his behaviour to politeness and gentleness.

Here the little slave girl, who has just escaped from prison and chains, tells the lord and master—the timid lover—a truth which he would not otherwise have heard at court. This sudden confidence combined with touching honesty contributes to one of the most beautiful scenes in the drama. Kālidāsa did not even give Śakuntalā such a speech as this by a slave girl.

The king becomes importunate and enjoys the girl's chaste resistance. He who had probably enjoyed the love of many women, whose favourite Irāvatī hoped to inflame him by drunkenness, does not approach the innocent girl in her dependent and dangerous position with the gentleness of which he has just boasted. Kālidāsa never allowed Dushyanta to seize his resisting Śakuntalā so brutally, nor Śiva his Pārvatī[137], nor Purūravas his harlot nymph who had come to him of her own free will, in the way in which Agnimitra triumphed at the efforts of the poor girl to defend her breasts and girdle from his searching hands. Only an uncontrolled despot would behave thus to the beautiful slave of his absent wife! One should imagine attack and defence in this lovers' scene as a long-drawn-out pantomime which fills half the stage during the following scene. Experts in these matters will have admired the king's ardour, otherwise than we Germans today.

> Irāvatī comes with her servant to reconcile herself—at least in the painting—with the king. Dhārinī's servant tells her that Mālavikā had been imprisoned on her (Irāvatī's) account. Irāvatī thanks her for this support, but adds that it cannot lighten her grief. Irāvatī and her servant stumble on the

> sleeping Vidūshaka, who in dream greets Mālavikā and wishes her victory over Irāvatī. The servant throws a stick at him. He screams for help, for he he thinks it is a snake. The king rushes up with Mālavikā behind him. Irāvatī reviles the king in words with a clearly double meaning about his union with his loved one in broad daylight. The king is offended at receiving a reproach in place of the customary greeting. Irāvatī accuses Vakulāvalikā of being a coupler. The king insists that Irāvatī's rage is misplaced—the two girls had only come to thank him for setting them free.
>
> Irāvatī's servant then tells her what tricks the Vidūshaka has played and Irāvatī scolds him, the adviser in the science of love.

As in the previous act, Irāvatī had come with loving intentions, but had let herself be provoked by events into wild rage. She cannot assert herself against the faithless despot. He on the other hand does not need to rage amongst his womenfolk, for any fears he may have are unnecessary.

In this act, Mālavikā—the shy little maiden—first scorned the king in the painting. The king had then at last held her in his arms, despite her resistance. The scolding scene with the enraged Irāvatī follows. A poet could hardly have compressed more into so short an act.

> The king and his friend are at a loss. Then the door-keeper Jayasenā approaches and reports that a monkey has frightened the little princess Vasulakshmī. The king hurries to his daughter. Irāvatī urges him on. The Vidūshaka praises the monkey which has rescued him and the king from an awkward situation. Mālavikā trembles in fear of Dhārinī. The gardener girl now reports that the aśoka tree is blooming, less than five days after Mālavikā performed the rites. This is a miracle. Vakulāvalikā comforts Mālavikā, for the queen will have to keep her promise. Mālavikā hastens with the gardener to the queen.

The monkey helps the king, the aśoka tree helps Mālavikā. Thus both are saved from a difficult position. At the end of Act VI of "Śakuntalā" Mātali had arranged for the demon to attack the Vidūshaka in the nick of time, in order to arouse the king to heroic action. Here the incident is accidental. The poet does not suggest that the Vidūshaka's scream was a trick here either, and he makes use of the little Vasulakshmī, whose childish chatter of Mālavikā's name before the action of the drama begins had helped the king in the early stages of his love adventure.

> In the prologue to Act V the gardener appears again to prepare the blossoming aśoka tree for queen Dhāriṇī's visit. She meets the hunchback[138], a servant of the queen, bringing 800 pieces of gold to the palace priest, for he is to arrange for the sacrificial priests to perform thanksgiving rites for the life of Prince Vasumitra, Dhāriṇī's son. News has come that the prince is to protect the sacrificial horses of Pushyamitra. The hunchback also tells of a letter which the queen has received from her brother Vīrasena, who has conquered the king of Vidarbha. Mādhavasena is free. A messenger arrives with rich gifts, slave girls etc., from the conquered, and the king is looking at them.

Act V opens with the doorkeeper preparing to call the king to the queen by the aśoka tree. Two singers report the king's approach. One of them sings a strophe in praise of him as the god of love in human form enjoying the song of the cuckoo as he wanders through the park along the bank of the Vidiśā, while far away his enemy is defeated. The other compares him to Vishnu (Kṛshṇa), who fetches his wife Rukminī in battle from the land of Vidarbha.

The queen wishes to meet the king at the aśoka tree, which was brought to early blossom by the touch of Mālavikā's foot. The singer compares the king to Kṛshṇa fetching his Rukminī from Vidarbha. These hints are sufficient for the initiated to guess that the queen is prepared to marry the king to Mālavikā, for they know that she is a princess of Vidarbha. The first singer praises the king's power which causes his armies to win victories under his general. Here, at the same time, the initiated senses the unspoken criticism of the weakling king who passes his time with manufactured love adventures.

The king rejoices over the victory against Vidarbha and laments his separation from Mālavikā.

He is affected in equal measure by important political and by purely personal events. The victory is to him not so much a matter of state, still less of his people, but simply of his own personal power.

> The Vidūshaka tries to encourage him; his accomplice Kauśikī has told him she has orders from the queen to deck Mālavikā in festive robes. This can only mean good news for the king. The doorkeeper invites him to come to the aśoka tree, for the queen awaits him there with Mālavikā and her court. The king and his friend walk through the park and admire the tree. The queen enters with the hermit woman, Mālāvikā and her following. Mālavikā believes she knows the reason for her festive garb, but her heart trembles nevertheless and her left eye quivers again and again.

The quivering of a woman's left eye is a good omen. The audience is now in no doubt that the king will win his beloved, but the poet lets them both express their uncertainty—no doubt to increase the suspense.

> After the traditional greeting the king expresses his admiration of the aśoka tree, which shows by its blossoming that it appreciates the queen's efforts.

Not the queen but Mālavikā has stilled the longing of the aśoka tree for the touch of a woman's foot, so that when the king nevertheless here speaks of the queen's efforts, perhaps he wishes to coax a few words from her about Mālavikā—but in vain.

> They sit down in silence (perhaps somewhat embarrassed) round the tree; the king is sad to be so near and yet so far from his beloved. The chamberlain then reports that the minister wishes to present the king with two more talented slave girls[139] from Vidarbha. They are singers. The king permits the queen and the queen permits Mālavikā to choose one of them as companion. They both fall weeping at Mālavikā's feet and tell the king that she is the sister of Mādhavasena. When Mādhavasena was taken prisoner his minister,

> Sumati, rescued Mālavikā. The girls know no more than this. But the hermit woman adds that she is Sumati's sister. With her and Mālavikā he had joined up with a caravan of merchants who were attacked by jungle robbers. Sumati was killed, she herself lost consciousness, awoke and continued alone to Vidiśā, assuming the attire of a Buddhist hermit. The king praised this as an action worthy of a good person. The hermit woman went on that Mālavikā had fallen into the hands of Vīrasena, who had then sent her to the queen.
>
> Mālavikā eagerly awaits what her master will say to all this. He deplores that she, a woman of queenly rank, should have been held as a slave—like a silken garment used as a bath towel. The queen, on the other hand, reproaches the hermit woman for not having disclosed Mālavikā's secret earlier.

When Mālavikā was recognised by the two slave girls, the queen reproached herself for having used sandalwood for her slippers. A similar expression to that used by the king—one does not use a silken robe in the bath etc.[140] But the trembling Mālavikā expects somewhat more warmth form the king. The queen's reproof of the hermit woman is actually warmer and more heartfelt than the king's somewhat prosaic remark. One should bear in mind that the king—as cultured, Sanscrit-speaking person and expert in love—should express himself better than the uneducated queen. Besides, the queen has only just conquered her perfectly justified feeling of jealousy of Mālavikā. It seems that Kālidāsa, in this scene too, did not mean to show the king in a particularly favourable light.

> The hermit woman parries the queen's reproach with a magic formula. God forbid! She has acted with deliberate harshness, for while Mālavikā's father still lived a hermit once came to a religious festival and prophesied that Mālavikā would serve as a slave for one year, but would then win a husband of equal rank. She, Kauśikī, saw how this prophecy was coming true while Mālavikā served Dhārinī and she now sees how rightly she acted. The king approves of her behaviour.

Śakuntalā and Urvaśī had brought a curse on themselves by their too-great love. Sītā was guilty of laughing at Śūrpanakhā, the spirit in "The Cloud Messenger" had himself done wrong. But in Mālavikā's case the poet does not place any blame on her. She, a princess, becomes a slave through mysterious fate, then is raised up and made happy. Thus the poet presented the slave Mālavikā as an innocent maiden. But the king and queen do not now turn lovingly to the innocent slave girl.

> The chamberlain reports that the minister wishes to know what should be done with Yajñasena, the king of Vidarbha. The king decides that he and Mādhavasena shall share the kingdom of Vidarbha between them. The chamberlain reports this to the council of ministers. One slave girl wishes Mālavikā luck now that her brother is king. But Mālavikā replies that all that is important is that he lives!

For Mālavikā places no value on a kingdom, either for herself or for her brother. In this short dialogue which Kālidāsa included here, he wished to show Mālavikā's modesty, which was necessary, for the minister reports that the council of ministers approves of the decision. Agnimitra will now be the overlord of these two kings. In Act I the king had quickly decided to take the offensive. He followed his angry impulse and his minister found the appropriate justification in the Book of State. Here again the king decides equally impulsively, but the council of ministers finds the political justification here in a sort of "divide et impera". At the beginning and end of the drama, the poet rounds off the king's love story with quick political decisions. Agnimitra makes the correct decision on both occasions, but he does not allow political matters to take up much of his time, and he does not allow his ministers to advise or direct him. He is in fact a masterful, not ungifted despot, but fairly deeply immersed in his love affairs. He does not even deal directly with his minister or council of ministers, but lets his chamberlain act as intermediary. The chamberlain is an old man, who has entry to the women's quarters and is permitted to interrupt the king in his private pleasures.

> The chamberlain then brings a message from Pushyamitra that his grandson has heroically guarded his sacrificial horse against the Greeks, as Amśumān had protected the sacrificial horse of his grandfather. He invites Agnimitra to the horse ceremony.

It was a well-known epic saga that Sagara had had a son, Asamañja, by the Vidarbha princess Keśinī. This man was so cruel that he was in the habit of throwing children of his town into the river and laughing as he did so[141]. His father Sagara banished him. But Asamañja's son was Amśumān, who rescued the sacrificial horse of his grandfather Sagara. Amśumān was Dilīpa's father, and "The Line of Raghu" began with Dilīpa. Kālidāsa certainly made this brief mention of Amśumān with the intention[142] of letting his audience or readers extend the parallel. Keśinī came from Vidarbha, like Mālavikā. But at that time, as in the case of Pushyamitra, it was not the son, but as an exceptional case the grandson who was the protector of the sacrificial horses. (Raghu, for instance, had been the protector for his father Dilīpa). In the case of Sagara's sacrifice the reason lay in the banishment of the murderous son Asamañja. In the case of Pushyamitra the reason was obviously that Agnimitra preferred to play at the swings in the park with his wives rather than fight[143]. This covert reference to Asamañja is particularly important because of the following scene. What was historical in this horse sacrifice is not determined through this reference.

> The hermit woman congratulates Dhārinī on her hero son. The queen expresses her joy by saying that the son takes after his father; the king turns to his chamberlain and remarks that the elephant calf has followed the leader of the herd, and the chamberlain replies: we are not surprised at this heroism in your son!

The hermit woman is right to congratulate the queen. Her rank as mother of the heir to the throne is now, despite the king's love for Mālavikā, assured. One is here reminded of Urvaśī the harlot who, through the birth of her son Āyus, takes precedence over Purūravas' queen.

The queen modestly attributes her son's heroism to his father,. but the king denies this, saying the elephant calf is heroic like the leader of the herd—Pushyamitra, who is the grandfather and not the father. Agnimitra knows that he is no hero! He does not envy his son's fame, for he prefers to play with women, as one of the royal singers had sung. The chamberlain certainly flatters his king as father of a hero. But old and new readers understand the poet's intention. This scene full of complimentary remarks shows the king in an unheroic light, but also as open-minded, although he does not actually forbid the chamberlain to flatter him.

> The king now frees the captured brother-in-law of Yajñasena as well as all the other prisoners, in honour of his victory. But the queen asks Irāvatī's consent before she fulfils her promise to Mālavikā. Irāvatī gives her consent; Dhārinī then hands over Mālavikā—encouraged by Kauśikī—to the king as her gift in honour of the good news.

There is no indication that Mālavikā had actually asked the queen to marry her to the king when she reported the blossoming of the aśoka tree. But the queen knew of her wish which she was obliged to fulfil, since she had given her word. It is only a sign of her friendly and sympathetic regard for the jealous character of her co-wife that she asks Irāvatī for her consent. And it is clever of her to combine this gift with the news of her son's heroism. The gift is easier for her too, for she now knows herself as mother of a hero to be in a superior position.

The king remains dumb and embarrassed. The Vidūshaka comes to his aid, saying the queen should give Mālavikā as a princess and not as a slave. Dhārinī confirms this, but the hermit woman reminds her of the usual custom, and the queen sends for a silken robe for Mālavikā[144] in which she is to be wrapped. Now at last the king accepts her. The Vidūshaka and the hermit woman praise queen Dhārinī's tolerance.

Selling or giving away daughters as slaves or as wives was a common thing. But here the king rightly wished for a public recognition of Mālavikā's high rank. Vasantasenā, the harlot, was finally presented by the ruler with a veil and recognised as the wife of the merchant Cārudatta—an honour which was not accorded Urvaśī.

Irāvatī sends her servant and begs the king's forgiveness and continued favour. Dhārinī assures her of the king's acceptance of her humility.

> The temperamental Irāvatī does not appear in person in this scene, for she is not to be allowed to disturb the conciliatory conclusion of the drama. It is not the king who sends the reply to her, for he and his Mālavikā are probably incapable of finding a suitable answer. The queen takes this duty on herself, for she—as mother of the heir—is in charge of the king's harem.
>
> The hermit woman begs leave to go to her brother. She is invited to return. She thanks and departs. The queen asks if she can be of further assistance to the king. He begs only her continued favour.

It was usual to bring a drama to its conclusion with a strophe of this kind, indicating that all ends well. The wise Mārīca asks Dushyanta, the wise Nārada asks Purūravas, if there is anything further they can do. Here therefore the queen takes over the role of these two mythical figures, the dispensers of heavenly blessings. Thus the poet has considerably raised her status. She is for the king the driving force, to whom he owes his heroic son and his new love. She is a model of the selfless wife who brings younger women to her husband. Compared with her the king is at most a self-controlled but mainly silent and inactive person in this last act. He is active in political matters but not in his love affair. He waits until her receives Mālavikā at the hands of his wife. Thus at the end Agnimitra is also presented as a model husband—although we can no longer recognise such polygamous marriage as good or beautiful. The impulsive Irāvatī also accepts her fate and promises to be the faithful servant of her faithless husband. And finally Mālavikā is also the model bride who waits in silence for her fate to be decided by the queen, her mistress, and the king who had been so passionate and now remains silent. Mālavikā was destined for Agnimitra; on her way to him she is seized and sold as a slave. Thus her position is similar to that of Pārvatī as Śiva's bride. But she does not serve her future husband and does nothing to win him. It is also uncertain whether she knows of the prophecy of which the hermit woman spoke. The Vidūshaka is also the model friend—selfless, resourceful, understanding and helpful.

Thus at the end of the drama all characters appear as models. We cannot today fully enjoy their development and might have preferred the poet to abide by his realistic picture of the king and others. He could not in fact bring the slave girl's love to a more realistic conclusion; he had to put an end to her state of slavery and thus to detract from it. Because of the form of the drama itself he could not develop a truly dramatic situation, for such a situation would of necessity have been revolutionary. But there was no revolutionary movement in the old India of his time, so that the great poet could not be expected to possess revolutionary feelings. The court poet Kālidāsa simply had to end his drama of the slave girl with general reconciliation.

But this does not diminish his greatness. He saw deeper into the problems of love than other old Indian poets and he wrote more humanly of them. In this connection it is only necessary to compare the wonderful—but stiff—saga of Śarmishṭhā or the epic Śakuntalā with Kālidāsa's dramas. But even he could not describe love more profoundly than was possible in his social world.

Mālavikā, Urvaśī and Śakuntalā were only loved for their beauty by the three kings, who never uttered a word about their spiritual or mental qualities. Only in the case of Pārvatī is there a hint that Śiva loves her not only for her beauty but also for her shy, willing and passionately enduring love. Pārvatī's love is difficult for us to understand; it is not a sensual and not a spiritual love, but springs only from obedience to her father and to her fate. But she shows Śiva her love through her practice of yoga much more earnstly than Śakuntalā, Urvaśī or Mālavikā with their girlish confessions which their kings overhear. One is ever again forced to the conclusion that Kālidāsa succeeded in picturing a particularly fine human love story in the story of the godly couple Śiva and Pārvatī.

But in this connection it should also not be overlooked that none of these beautiful women ever wavered in her love for her husband. This would not have seemed tragic to Indian patriarchal society, and even the great poet Kālidāsa remained blind to such possibilities.

Kālidāsa sang again and again of the pains of separation and the joys of love. But since he portrayed in each of his works the loves, despairs and happiness of truly different people, since he showed his lovers as lovable despite their faults, and made them genuinely human and alive—for all these reasons he is to be accounted a great and warm-hearted poet who for more than a thousand years has inspired all those who have learned to know his work. And his inspiration will not fade, either in his homeland India or anywhere else where the human heart feels the impact of true art.

10. Kālidāsa's Influence

It seems that as early as 473 the author of an inscription imitated Kālidāsa's verse; thus he must already have been famous at that time[145]. He was mentioned as a famous poet in an inscription of 634, the author of which was especially impressed by "The Line of Raghu"[146].

Kālidāsa's works were transcribed again and again, and thus spread gradually all over India. This shows how well loved they were, but had also the disadvantage that the texts became more and more inaccurate with each transcription. In "The Cloud Messenger" for instance, this is particularly clear, for not only does the number of verses vary, but also their order, so that modern research has not yet succeeded in reproducing what can without question be accepted as Kālidāsa's original text[147].

Indologists can now distinguish between various local versions of the drama of "Śakuntalā", for the innumerable handwritings in which this popular work was written can be classified according to origin and writing style into four groups—a Kashmiri, a Central Indian (in Nāgarī alphabet), a Bengali and a South Indian. The Bengali version contains the largest number of verses, the principal feature of the Central Indian version is the considerable abbreviation of the love scene in Act III, the South Indian version is said to contain some falsifications[148]. It is important that in the case of the great popular epics one comes upon very similar local handwriting groups. A closer investigation of such conditions may reveal that the local versions can actually be called national, for as the Bengali and Punjabi nations etc. developed during the last thousand years, the languages along with their written forms have also developed into national languages, and these honourable old texts were handed down in the old language —in Sanscrit and in the Prākrits—but nevertheless in the local, i.e. national versions.

In the drama of "Urvaśī" too, it can be seen that in the operalike Act IV some strophes are missing in Apabhramśa, a special dialect[149]. But annotated editions of Kālidāsa's complete works which would allow of an over-all study of the entire existing material are not yet available.

The problem of commentating is rendered more difficult by the existence of many versions. There are about 40 Indian commentaries[150] each to "The Cloud Messenger", "The Birth of the War God" and "The Line of Raghu", and about 25 to "Śakuntalā"[151]. But up to now only a small proportion of these have been printed, so that we cannot get a clear picture of these either. If one considers in this connection the tradition of the epics, it is justifiable to assume that the commentaries are based on different local or national groups of handwriting. So that these will also be of importance one day in presenting a picture of the slow development of the Indian nations—quite apart from their importance for the reconstruction of the original texts and for the interpretation of the poet's works. These commentaries will play a special part in revealing how Kālidāsa's works lived on through the centuries, how he was admired and how understood.

To this must be added the later imitations of Kālidāsa's works. "The Cloud Messenger" in particular gave rise to a whole literary class of such messages—wind messengers, swan messengers etc. "The Cloud Messenger" has also been translated into Tibetan, Singhalese and Malayan[152]. "The Line of Raghu" has wandered as far as the island of Bali[153]. Mention has already been made of the later addition by an admirer of a concluding section to the "Birth of the War God"[154]. But it seems that this epic has had an influence on the Śiva and Mahāśiva Purāna, too, for the love of Pārvatī and Śiva is there told in a very similar way. One can of course assume that Kālidāsa used a Purāṇa as a source which also influenced these two Śiva Purāṇas, but there are as yet no evidences of such an old version[155]. The situation is similar with regard to the Padma Purāṇa and the story of "Śakuntalā"[156]; some believe that Kālidāsa used this Purāṇa as his source, others believe that the Purāṇa was influenced by Kālidāsa[157]. There are similar problems with regard to the Matsya Purāṇa and the drama of Urvaśī[158].

There are occasional further evidences of Kālidāsa's influence; the great storyteller Somadeva, for instance, drew on the beginning of the drama of "Śakuntalā" for his 20th story of Vetala[159], his version of Urvaśī[160], however, varies considerably from that of Kālidāsa.

It is not at all surprising that poets, dramatists, anthologists and perhaps also lexicographers[161] readily referred to Kālidāsa as the great master in their textbooks[162].

There is also no doubt that Kālidāsa's plays were produced, and it is easy to see why "Śakuntalā"[163] was the first drama to come to the attention of English scholars and to be translated into English for the first time in 1789 by Jones. This introduced Kālidāsa's poetry to Europe.

But his works were much more widely read and admired in India itself. They have been re-published and commentated for use in schools and universities many times during the last 150 years. Students are expected to know "Śakuntalā" and "The Line of Raghu" especially well, and to prove it in examinations.

Rabindranath Tagore's book "Shipwreck" (1906)[164], is a convincing evidence of Kālidāsa's living influence. Here Tagore himself refers to "The Birth of the War God", and comparison of the two works shows that Tagore was considerably influenced by the older work[165]. Tagore had occupied himself since the early 1890's with Kālidāsa's verse and prose works, but especially with "Śakuntalā", "The Cloud Messenger" and "The Birth of the War God". Despite his admiration for the poet, he had criticised Kālidāsa's preoccupation with dukes in their splendour rather than with the sufferings of the poor.

Tagore has, so to say, translated the old Śiva fable into modern form, using it as one thread running through his novel.

A young doctor from Benares, Nalinaksha, suddenly marries an orphaned Bengali village girl, Kamala, who is quite unknown to him. Even at the wedding the shy couple do not look at each other. On the following day, out in a boat, they are caught in a storm and separated. Nalinaksha fears that Kamala has been drowned and decides to wait a year for her. But he feels himself already a widower (like Kālidāsa's Śiva). The shock of this experience drives him to asceticism. He carries out his rites daily, but continues to practice as a good doctor in Benares, where he lives with his orthodox mother.

But Kamala has come ashore on a sandbank and there meets Ramesh, a young jurist, who has also lost his young wife, whom he had also not yet seen, in the same storm. They both believe themselves to be the newly wedded couple, but Ramesh soon discovers his mistake. He does not venture, however, to tell the trusting and dependent young Kamala and he lives in brotherly friendship with her. After a period of this painful proximity Kamala discovers the truth through a letter written by Ramesh. She leaves him at once without a message, and goes in search of her husband Nalinaksha. After all kinds of adventures she becomes house daughter to Nalinaksha's mother and works for her. Both young people are shy and retiring. Kamala feels that she has sullied herself in living with Ramesh and wants only to serve her unconscious husband. She renounces all the happiness of wifehood and motherhood. Only gradually, under the influence of another woman, does she realise that she must tell Nalinaksha the truth and that she can rely on his understanding. Nalinaksha has long admired her purity and humility. Now only a word from her is needed and he takes her into his protecting arms and leads her to his mother.

Kamala's behaviour, her selfless service, is "yoga of action" which was already praised in the Bhagavadgita and recommended to wives in particular, in epic stories such as that of the virtuous huntsman[166]. Here a yogi achieves magic power in the jungle and thereby grows proud and overbearing, but is then criticised and humbled by a simple, fine woman. This woman serves her husband faithfully and is thus immune from the curse which that yogi wished to place on her because she did not bring him food quickly before serving her own husband.

In both Kālidāsa's "Birth of the War God" and Tagore's "Shipwreck" we find a widow who practices yoga rites and retreats from this world, but Tagore's figure works on as a doctor. The two women also practice. yoga but Kamala does this in a practical way as house daughter. It is her "yoga of action" which finally wins her her destined husband. Both poets have pictured the couple's development; Kālidāsa shows how the ascetic widow gradually turns his thoughts to the girl, and how the girl—who should be thought of as quite young and innocent—rises to heights of determination and profound love. But Tagore could not picture the glowing passion of the newly-wedded pair with the same sensua fire as Kālidāsa had done. Kālidāsa no doubt showed great courage in picturing the highest gods in such a human way. But Tagore, who had already met with the opposition of the upper ten thousand in Bengal on account of his co-educational country school in Shantiniketan, could not—or at least did not attempt—to write so freely in the colonial and early capitalistic India of his day.

Pārvatī was determined to achieve marriage with Śiva, for he was her destined husband. But Kamala, who was even ritually married already to Nalinaksha, did not dare to hope for this. She felt herself sullied by contact with Ramesh, just as many held Śita to have been sullied by Rāvana[167]. But Vālmīki had completely absolved Sītā of blame for this in his epic, and Kālidāsa was even more positive about Sītā's innocence, for he severely criticised Rāma for his suspicions. Here again Tagore is more cautious than Kālidāsa; and compared with Pārvatī, Kamala underwent deep humiliation.

To understand Tagore's attitude to yoga one must consider the doctrines of his times. In 1886—when Tagore was 25—the first part of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's commentary on the Bhagavadgita was published in Bengal, Tagore's home. This great patriotic writer, from whose pen the Indian national anthem comes, wrote for western-educated Indians and strove to modernise old Indian religion. He taught that the law of selfless action (yoga of action) should no longer be confined to the four castes as prescribed in the Gita, but should apply to all castes. Not only should everyone fulfil his caste duties, but each should fulfil them in accordance with his nature, his physical and mental capacity. Humanity took the place of the priestly caste order[168].

Vivekananda, a pupil of the famous ascetic Ramakrishna, taught in Bengal during the 1890's a new interpretation of the Gītā, its yoga in action and its other forms of yoga[169]. Yoga was to him the science of self-recognition, which was to free men from sorrow and make them active; the man as family father should strive for riches so that he could also help the poor. But he should be fully selfless and not expect gratitude, but only do his duty as a man. Everyone should engage in work befitting his class, for the sake of the work itself and not of its remuneration. Even the most menial work should be recognised as such. This kind of yoga in action meant at the same time total submission to fate. But for this it was not necessary to be a pronounced ascetic. It sufficed, for example, for a wife to serve her husband faithfully and a son his father. This practical yoga is on a higher level than that of the professional ascetic[170].

Kamala was one of the selfless women, and Hemnalini (see below) tried to reconcile herself to her fate through yoga. There is therefore no doubt that Tagore was familiar with the yoga teachings of Vivekananda and perhaps also of Bankim Chatterjee. Such teachings urging to action were very necessary for the Indians, and especially for the Bengali upper and middle classes of that time. The big landowners remained inactive on their estates, merchants carried on their old business as moneylenders. But it was important to build up an industry if India were to break away from the British colonial yoke. The melancholy quietism of the old Indian religions had to give way before capitalist activities. Men should not seek to escape but to participate cheerfully in social actions.

Tagore's family was one of these big landowning families which developed into business people, and Rabindranath studied law in England. The young people in his novel were jurists, doctors, teachers, they read English literature—but at the same time they found comfort and strength in the old religious practices and the teachings of yoga. In the case of Hemnalini this way failed. Nalinaksha was able to combine these teachings with his medical work and Kamala found her way to yoga in action. Ramesh and Hemnalini's brother (see below) do not attempt yoga, but Nalinaksha's clever mother does to some extent. It seems that Tagore knew and admired the teachings of Bankim and Vivekananda but did not dare praise them more openly.

Kālidāsa on the other hand had quite another problem—that of the victory of love over yoga—a problem many times touched upon in old India—without any shrinking from the presentation of the joys of life. Ascetics were also seduced by beautiful women in legends[171]. But this was not enough for Kālidāsa. He approved of Pārvatī for making use of yoga practices to achieve her love; she aimed at no temporary seduction of the husband destined to her, but at permanent union with the wonderful Śiva who refused her.

A further difference between the two works is that Tagore wove this one thread of action into a second and thus presented a more complicated problem. He placed Nalinaksha and Kamala over against Ramesh and Hemnalini, two equally problematic natures. Ramesh has really lost his new wife in the same storm. He comes together with Kamala but actually loves Hemnalini, a literature student. He has not the heart to abandon Kamala, but he wishes to marry Hemnalini and afterwards tell her the whole story. But an intriguer describes him to Hemnalini's family as living as a husband with Kamala. He loses Hemnalini and somewhat later Kamala leaves him (see above). Hemnalini's brother tries to bring about a reconciliation, but up to the end of the novel he has no success. Hemnalini and Ramesh disappear from the story without coming together again. The reader is left in doubt as to whether there is a happy ending for the two, who both live in Calcutta.

Ignoring details, it may be pointed out that Tagore deliberately compared the natural, uneducated Kamala with the modern i.e. English-educated Hemnalini.

This partly emancipated girl retreats into yoga in her despair and becomes Nalinaksha's pupil. But she does not win inner peace in this way. She, the modern town girl, is not equal to the servant girl Kamala in this respect. Hemnalini's education prevents her from being happy in yoga like Kamala. The poet brought out the contradiction between the old and the new India in this comparison of two good and beautiful girls—decidedly in favour of the old, at least for the time being. The reader is of course free to imagine Hemnalini's happiness in a sequel.

Ramesh is also a problematic nature. A modern jurist, he cannot use his knowledge to help him out of his difficulties. He cannot clarify his relations with the two women. He lets his father force him into marriage and does not insist on marrying Hemnalini. The wife forced on him dies in the storm, but he feels himself chained to Kamala and does not know what to do. The poet portrays him with loving care as an innocent-guilty and therefore tragic figure, but his weakness is basically unforgivable.

On the other hand, Nalinaksha the yogi is sure of his path, just as Kamala with her yoga practice is self-assured in comparison with the modern-educated Hemnalini. Herein lies a positive recognition of yoga by the poet.

The poet's inclusion of a religious problem in this novel is important in a consideration of his attitude. The problem is contained in the contrast between orthodoxy and the modern reform sect of Brahmo Samaj[172]. This sect was founded by Rammohan Roy, father of Indian nationalism, in 1828; it was progressive and gathered the bourgeois elements together which at that time hoped for progress through British rule. After the European revolutionary year of 1848 and India's of 1857, however, those elements in English policy which had originally had progressive meaning for India were no longer so, and the Indian bourgeoisie was disappointed. It turned to the national conservatism of people like G. Tilak, who was the greatest leader of the Indian national liberation struggle in the 1890's. There did not yet exist a working class capable of concerted struggle. A point at issue at that time was child marriage. The British wished to raise the marriageable age of girls from ten to twelve years, the Brahmo Samaj was in favour of this, but Tilak and his followers were against it.

Tagore, through his father, belonged to the Brahmo Samaj movement. But he let Kamala, the child bride, be happy and Hemnalini, the grown girl, remain unhappy—at least for the span of his novel. In the case of Nalinaksha the poet emphasised that although himself a member of the reform sect, Nalinaksha nevertheless wanted to marry a very young orthodox girl to please his mother, who would be able to educate her daughter-in-law in her old-fashioned way. He thought on old Indian traditional lines more of a servant for the housework than of a wife. But in the very case of Kamala, whom he married for this reason, Tagore actually pictured such a good, pure, gentle and practical girl that her mother-in-law did not have to educate her in any way. Thus Tagore defended the age-old Indian tyranny of the mother-in-law, only modifying it insofar as in this particular case child marriage brought no tyranny with it. The girl herself voluntarily practices yoga in action. Thus Tagore did not venture to take an open stand on the side of Brahmo Samaj and progress, presumably because it was encouraged by the British and rejected by the nationalists.

The British divided rebellious Bengal in 1905, in order to have a better control over the Indian national movement. But in that year the Japanese victory over the Imperial Russian Army and the initial victories of the Russian workers and peasants over the Czar showed that a struggle by the "weak" Asiatic peoples and by the exploited might be successful. On August 7th 1905 the Indian progressives resolved on a boycott of British imports. Tagore wrote his novel just at this time, and it was published in 1906. He took an enthusiastic part in the struggle against the division of his homeland Bengal. And he allowed the English-educated girl in his novel to suffer. But he avoided introducing important British characters into the novel and he also avoided any conversations on questions of colonial rule.

This political indecisiveness also shows up in his characters. He does not show all supporters of Brahmo Samaj in a good light. Hemnalini's father Annada is a person who brings up his daughter in a progressive way and wants her to marry only when she is grown up, but he is inexcusably weak towards his son (for he does not approve of orthodox discipline), is mean, unrefined in speech, hypochondriac and ineffectual. He loves his daughter but cannot help her.

His son is described as unpleasantly "modern"—as a schoolmaster without interest in his work, as a consciously average person, suspicious of piety, stupid and never the equal of the intriguer Akshay. At Akshay's instigation he tyrannises over his sister and his friend Ramesh and makes them both unhappy.

Nalinaksha's marriage to the child Kamala has already been discussed.

Amongst the orthodox characters, Nalinaksha's mother Kshemankari is drawn as a good wife. She takes a tolerant attitude towards her husband and son, who belong to the reform sect. Tolerance has for thousands of years been regarded as a great virtue in India. Tagore was also tolerant in his novel.But tolerance can also have its weak side in that it leaves problems and struggles unsolved and thus hinders progress and the open clash of contradictions.

Kshemankari's husband had taken a second wife when she refused to join the reform movement with him, and this was held very much against him. His son Nalinaksha went to live with his mother at that time and resolved to make things easier for her by marrying an orthodox wife. When Kamala disappeared his mother sought an adult girl with reformed ideas—Hemnalini—for him as bride, for she was as tolerant as her reformed son. But she saw that they did not suit each other, that she had made a mistake in trying to force her son into this marriage. She was mistaken here in her judgment of Hemnalini, but the poet gave her considerable credit for recognising her mistake. This orthodox woman gets more praise than blame from him.

Ramesh's orthodox father is a hard man. He forces his son to marry an orthodox girl, without considering his love for Hemnalini, from whom he even separates him hastily. An orthodox couple with whom Kamala had to live as a servant for some time are pictured as definitely bad. The reader cannot possibly decide what Tagore's own position is from these "tolerant" estimates of the good and bad characteristics of both sides—the orthodox and the reformed characters. Of course, a writter should avoid "black and white" judgments, but he should also reveal his own position, otherwise he does not help the reader to understand society, does not help him to knowledge and goodness and to an enjoyment of the good, the beautiful and the true.

But the novel deals not only with the problem of child marriage, but also with that of love marriage. Ramesh is taken from Hemnalini by his father and married to another woman. Hemnalini is estranged from Ramesh by her father and is to marry Nalinaksha. Nalinaksha marries an orthodox girl and is later prepared to marry Hemnalini because his mother wishes it. These young people do not venture to be honest and open with their parents. The innocent Kamala is frank only at the very end. Hemnalini's brother is frank, but stupid and brutal as well. There is no question of marriage in his case. He is rude to his father and therefore bad. "Good" children obey the edicts of their parents. This is an old Indian patriarchal ideal and Tagore levelled an accusation against society when he pictured the sufferings of the younger generation under this heritage.

Ramesh's orthodox father has no doubts about the correctness of his tyrannical behaviour. Hemnalini's reformed father is basically weak in his dealings with his daughter, and she is even weaker when she finally obeys her hesitant and easily-influenced father, because she has begun to have doubts of Ramesh herself.

Kshemankari alone, Nalinaksha's clever and orthodox mother, reaches the view from her own experience and thought that she was wrong in trying to force her son to marry Hemnalini. She sees that it was her own selfishness which prompted her to get her son married before she died to a girl whom she herself liked. Her own haste caused her to get a false impression of the girl. This self-criticism raises the orthodox Kshemankari high above the other characters in the novel, and it is at the same time a criticism of age-old custom, of old Indian society itself. This is a far higher form of self-criticism than Kamala's, for Kamala quite falsely believes herself to be unworthy after having lived with Ramesh. Kamala's humility degrades her and causes her unnecessary suffering. Kshemankari, on the other hand, corrects her mistake, excuses her son from marrying Hemnalini and praises him before Kamala, although she does not know that Kamala has been ritually wed to him for nearly a year.

Nevertheless Tagore closes his novel with the following words of Nalinaksha, the good and clever son—doctor, reformist and yoga devotee in one—to his re-found Kamala: "Mother has forgiven many sins in her life; how should she not forgive you a sin which was no sin at all?"

Further than this criticism of Indian society, with its cruel age-old elements of patriarchal tyranny, the poet could not go in 1906. It would be unreasonable to demand of him that he should rise to heights of militant optimism such as we admire in actual realistic novels.

Mukhtar Auesov wrote powerfully and humanly in his great novel "Abay"[173] against such cruel treatment of youth and love. He wrote against the terrible custom of parents in Kasakhstan in the 19th century of selling their children and calling this slavery marriage. A. Koptyelov[174] dealt with the same problem amongst the Altai nomads, who after the October Revolution settled down and began a new social life.

Finally brief mention should be made of the problem of fatalism. Kālidāsa, like all pious Hindus, was a fatalist, but fatalism plays no part in his love story of Pārvatī and Śiva. It is actually determined by fate that she shall bear a child, but the poet did not let his characters be driven by fate. He let them work actively for the fulfillment of their destinies. Tagore was different. His characters all express fatalistic ideas from time to time and in this they are in line with the teaching which Indian priests of the most varying religions had been instilling into the people for at least two thousand years.

But the construction of the novel is also fatalistic insofar as coincidence plays an over-important part in it. And according to Indian ideas coincidence is fate. Man earns his fate in accordance with the teachings on soul wandering. Every incident in life is a reward or a punishment for good or evil dealings, and these are themselves the result of human action. Thus there is no real coincidence. It is fate when storm and shipwreck separate the two wedded couples and re-unite them falsely. The poet named his work after this decisive opening action. It is coincidence when the intriguer learns of Ramesh's apparent bigamy, for his sister attends the same school as Kamala. Kamala accidentally finds Ramesh's letter to Hemnalini with his confession of his true relations to the two women. It is coincidence that Hemnalini's father consults Nalinaksha when he is ill and thus comes into contact with him. Kamala accidentally finds her Nalinaksha in the house where she serves like a slave. Belief in coincidence and fate arises from human powerlessness in the face of nature and society. Aside from the fact that Tagore here follows old priestly tradition which had been attacked only by a few courageous materialists during the last two thousand years, this fatalism shows a hesitant side of Tagore, that in 1905 and 1906 he could not choose with sufficient decision between the nationalists and the reformed progressives.

In considering the great differences between the old and the modern Indian classical writer, it should be borne in mind that Kālidāsa belonged to a time of rising development, the beginning of feudalism, while Tagore lived in the period of British imperialism, of the decay of capitalism. As a member of the big landowning class, he could not recognise the path of progress sufficiently clearly—despite his great humanity and poetic gifts.

Karl Marx had already pointed out in 1853[175] that England played a double role in India, that of destroying the old Indian feudal order through the development of capitalism and at the same time laying the material basis for the development of a new, industrialised India. But only the material basis, for Marx already realised that the task of the Indian people themselves was to take the economics and politics of their country into their own hands. This would be the real revolution in India's long history.

The transition from primitive to slave society and thereafter to feudalism actually took place very slowly and almost unnoticed, and in India neither slave society nor feudalism were so clearly or completely developed as in Europe. Remains of the old forms survived in agrarian India down to very recent times, since Indian society stagnated and developed very slowly compared with Europe. Child marriage, patriarchy in the family, yoga practices etc. went on for several thousand years in India without much change. The Śivaism of Kālidāsa's times had changed little in Tagore's day.

It is clear that British colonial rule brought much that was new—for instance the form of the novel. Such mastery in portraying characters is not to be found in old Indian works. But what was also new in Tagore was his indictment of old surviving customs—the clever Kshemankari's criticism of parental tyranny. Only after such historical comparisons can the reader of today get a clearer picture of the great importance of both works and of the profound humanity of these two Indian poets. Along these lines we Europeans shall arrive at a genuine understanding of the Indian people and of their great historical achievements, and shall also enrich our thoughts with these gems of world literature.

ANNOTATIONS

[1] Of the usual works of reference only the following are occasionally quoted: M. Winternitz, Geschichte der indischen Literatur III, Leipzig 1920; St. Konow-Das indische Drama, Berlin-Leipzig 1920; L. Renou, L'Inde Classique, Paris-Hanoi 1953.

[2] Geschichte Indiens, Große Sowjet-Enzyklopaedie, Reihe Geschichte und Philosophie Nr. 44, Berlin 1954, 36.

[3] E. Windisch, Geschichte der Sanskrit-Philologie und indischen Altertumskunde, Straßburg 1917, 23.

[4] Ibid., 47.

[5] Forster wrote Sakontala instead of Śakuntalā.

[6] Windisch, 56.

[7] Ibid., 204 sq.

[8] Goethe, West-oestlicher Diwan, 2. Noten und Abhandlungen, Berlin 1952, 188 sq.

[9] Windisch, 91.

[11] Ibid., 204.

[11] Ibid., 37.

[12] Hero of an episode in an epic, see under Ann. 63.

[13] Both quotations in Winternitz, III, 107.

[14] Goethe, West-oestlicher Diwan, 189; on Kosegarten compare Windisch 219 and 227; he lived in Greifswald.

[15] Winternitz.

[16] Ibid., 105. The translation by H. von Glasenapp, Das Spiel des Unendlichen, Basel 1953, 44 sqq. is recommended.

[17] Windisch, 38 sq.; compare Fr. Adelung, Bibliotheca Sanscritica, St. Petersburg 1837, 312 sq. on Urvaśī.

[18] Mālavikā and Agnimitra, translated from Sanscrit for the first time by A. Weber, Berlin 1856.

[19] Winternitz III, 222.

[20] Adelung, 259.

[21] Raghuvamscha oder Raghus Stamm, ein Kunstepos Kālidāsas, von O. Walter, München-Leipzig 1914; Der Kumārasambhava oder die Geburt des Kriegsgottes, ein Kunstgedicht des Kālidāsa, von O. Walter, ibid. 1913.

[22] Introduction p. 5 sq.

[23] Quoted in H. Mayer, Meisterwerke deutscher Literaturkritik, I, Berlin 1954, 543 sq.

[24] Compare W. Ruben, Geschichte der indischen Philosophie, Berlin 1954, 272, on these three branches of learning.

[25] Hillebrandt 7 sq. according to Tāranātha's History of Buddhism.

[26] The anecdote has reached the Avantisundarī, the Kathāsaritsāgara and the Bṛhatkathāmañjari from the Bṛhatkathā. Compare W. Ruben, Der Sinn des Dramas „Das Siegel und Rākshasa", Berlin 1956, chap. II B 1–2.

[27] Konow, S. 61, Ann. 23; Winternitz, III, 44; Hillebrandt, 30, 66; see under Ann. 145.

[28] Renou (see above, Ann. 1) § 1767; see under Ann. 117; L. de La Vallee-Poussin, Dynasties et Histoire de l'Inde depuis Kanishka jusqu'aux invasions musulmanes, Paris 1935, 48 sq.

[29] V. A. Smith, The Oxford History of India, 1928, 154; R. C. Majumdar, H. C. Raychaudhuri, Kalikinkar Datta, An Advanced History of India, London 1953, 196.

[30] See below. Mālavikā was carried off by such robber members of a south Indian tribe.

[31] K. A. Antonova, On the Question of the Development of Feudalism in India, Short Statement of the Institute of Oriental Research, III, 1952, 23 sqq. (Russian). Compare Majumdar, 153 sqq., 196, on Hun invasions.

[32] Details in W. Ruben, Die Rolle der Sklaven im alten Indien, Berlin 1956.

[33] P. C. Bagchi, India and China, New York 1951, 25.

[34] H. Jacobi in Zeitschrift d. deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft 30, 1876 302 sqq.

[35] Ruben (see above, ann. 24) 220 sqq., 250 sq. The reference is to Dignaga in Verse 14 of the Cloud Messenger.

[36] Mālavikā Act I, Urvaśī Act III; Bharata as a whole is placed in the 6th to 8th century A.D.: Renou (see Ann. 1) § 1579.

[37] Renou § 1607: perhaps the 4th to 5th century A.D.

[38] Ibid., § 1599.

[39] W. Ruben, Kālidāsas Raghuvamśa, der klassische indische Fürstenspiegel, Publications de l'Université d'Ankara, Annales de l'Université 1947, 139 sqq., especially 190.

[40] Kauṭalya 91.

[41] Manu VII, 78.

[42] Mālavikā Act V, p. 82, 15, Bollensen ed. Leipzig 1879.

[43] Ibid., 10, 17.

[44] Compare W. Ruben, Indra's fight with Vṛtra in the Mahābhārata, Dr. S. K. Belvalkar Felicitation Volume 1957.

[45] Translated in Hillebrandt, 150 sq.; compare Ruben (see above, Ann. 39), 181 sqq.

[46] W. Ruben, Über die Literatur der vorarischen Stämme Indiens, Berlin 1952.

[47] Ibid., 117 sqq.

[48] On works of doubtful authorship compare Renou (see above, Ann. 1) § 1768, 1791.

[49] Hillebrand 28 sq.

[50] Compare W. Schubring, Jinasena, Mallinātha, Kālidāsa, ZDMG 105, 1955, 331 sqq.

[51] H. Tichy, Zum heiligsten Berge der Welt, Vienna 1937.

[52] Nyāyasūtra III, 1, 30 sqq. (German by W. Ruben, Leipzig 1928).

[53] O. H. K. Spate, India and Pakistan, London 1954, 41.

[54] Mahābhārata I, 213 sqq.

[55] W. Ruben, Studien zur Textgeschichte des Rāmāyaṇa, Stuttgart 1936, 233 sqq.

[56] Line of Raghu XII, 59–66.

[57] W. Ruben, Kālidāsas Raghuvamsà, eine Gallerie altindischer Despoten, Annales de l'Université d'Ankara vol. 2, 1948, 231 sqq., esp. 251 Ann. 83.

[58] Rām. IV, 34, 12 sq. (A); 42, 12 ;q. (B); 44, 12 sq. (C) (A is the northwestern, B the Bengali, C the south Indian version).

[59] Ibid., IV, 32, 8 (A); 40, 9 sq. (B); 40, 10 (C).

[60] Ibid., VI, 104, 1–63 (A); 108, 1–47 (B); 123, 1–53 (C).

[61] Raghuvaṁśa 13, 1–79.

[62] Māhabhārata III, 53; see above Ann. 12.

[63] Verse 6, 79, 102 (Mallinātha).

[64] The following is fully dealt with, and with references, in W. Ruben, Kālidāsas mythologische Frauengestalten: Śakuntalā, Urvaśī und Pārvatī, Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung II, 1, 1954, esp. 130sqq. Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya, in The Authorship of the latter Half of the Kumārasambhava, Journal of the Asiatic Society, Letters. Vol. XX, No. 2, 1954, 313–336, expressed himself against the rejection of the second part of the work as not genuine.

[65] Compare H. Meinhard, Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Śivaismus nach den Purāṇas, Berlin 1928, 35sq.

[66] Mahābhārata II, 31; XIII, 2.

[67] Compare W. Ruben, Die Erlebnisse der zehn Prinzen, Berlin 1952, 57sqq.; 33.

[68] Nyāyasūtra (see above Ann. 52) IV, 2, 40.

[69] Ruben (see above Ann. 24) 287.

[70] Kauṭalya 129, prac.

[71] Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels, Ausgewählte Schriften in 2 Bänden, Moscow 1950, I, 319.

[72] W. Ruben, Vier Liebestragödien des Rāmāyaṇa, ZDMG 100, 1, 1950, 287sqq. esp. 307sqq.

[73] Mahābhārata XI, 16sqq.

[74] Rāmāyaṇa VII, 16 (A), 16 (B), 17 (C).

[75] B. Breloer, Altindisches Privatrecht bei Megasthenes und Kauṭalya, Bonn 1928, 36.

[76] Irāvatī is intoxicated in Act III of "Mālavikā".

[77] Rgveda I, 179.

[78] Compare detailed presentations in Ann. 39 and 57.

[79] In contrast to the moon dynasty, see under Ann. 95.

[80] Examples in Chāndogya-Upanishad IV, 10 and Mahābhārata I, 3, 19sqq.

[81] Compare W. Ruben, Inter-State Relations in Ancient India and Kauṭalya's Arthaśāstra, Year Book of International Affairs IV, 1956 Madras.

[82] W. Ruben, Einführung in die Indienkunde, Berlin 1954, 179sqq.

[83] See under Mālavikā Act V.

[84] Hillebrandt, 56.

[85] Rāmāyaṇa III, 23, 19 (A); 24, 19 (B); 18, 19 (C).

[86] Hillebrandt, 62, has not emphasised this.

[87] Compare W. Ruben, Über die ethische Idealgestalt des Rāma, Festschrift W. Kirfel, Bonn 1955, 277sqq.

[88] See above Ann. 72.

[89] Sri Aurobindo, Kālidāsa, Pondicherry 1950 (1st ed. 1929) p. 1sqq. describes the time lag between the two poets, which he estimates at a thousand years (p. 10).

[90] But Kālidāsa did not make use of the Rāma story in the Mahābhārata III, 273–291, which ends with Rāma's return home to Ayodhyā.

[91] Compare Hillebrandt, 65.

[92] Compare the history of Sukanyā in Mahābhārata III, 122 and of Śarmishṭhā, see below, Ann. 129.

[93] See below, Ann. 133sq., 137.

[94] The essay quoted in Ann. 64 is detailed.

[95] See above, Ann. 79.

[96] How Śakuntalā learns the truth about him is not shown on the stage. Should this lie not have seemed suspicious to the girl? Does it make the audience suspect evil to come?

[97] Konow (see above, Ann. 1) quotes a Sanscrit verse in § 77 on this.

[98] Vīrasena in "Mālavikā" is such a brother-in-law.

[99] On the artistic composition of the drama Mudrārākshasa see the work quoted in Ann. 26.

[100] It was naturally the poet's intention, too, not to bring him on to the stage here.

[101] Compare the detailed discussion of the drama in the essay quoted in Ann. 64.

[102] Compare Ruben (see above Ann. 46) 20sqq.; H. Zimmer, "Der König der dunklen Kammer", in three transformations from Rigveda to Tagore, ZDMG 83, 1929, 187sqq.

[103] F. Geissler, Brautwerbung in der Weltliteratur, Halle 1955, 43.

[104] W. Ruben, Krishna, Istanbul 1943, 17sq.

[105] Ibid., 21.

[106] Kauṭalya I, 38, 1sq. (ed. Ganapati Sastri).

[107] Ruben (above) 20sq.

[108] Cloud Messenger Verse 102.

[109] This is the War God, see above, Chap. 5.

[110] Rāmāyaṇa III, 60sqq.; compare J. J. Pandya, Kālidāsa's Indebtedness to Vālmīki, Journ. Oriental Institute of the University of Baroda I, 1952, 4. 343–45. Kālidāsa's indebtedness to Vālmīki goes even furthert han Pandya's material. Pandya's chief witness cannot actually be utilised, for the verse, Urvaśī IV, 27 (Pandya p. 343) is missing in both northern versions of the Rāmāyaṇa, can therefore very well have come from Kālidāsa's drama into the south Indian manuscripts of the epic as C III, 64, 29–30:

A III, 69	B III, 68	C III, 64	D III, 64
43 ab	42 ab	26 cd	27 ab
43 cd	42 cd	27 ab (sim. B)	27 cd
		27 cd, 28 ab	28
44 ab	43 ab	28 cd (sim. B)	29 ab
		29–30 ab	29 cd, 30
44 cd	43 cd	30 cd	31 ab

(D – ed. Krishnacarya and Vyasacarya with the Commentary of Govindaraja, Bombay, 1911).

[111] Hunchbacked slaves at king's courts are frequently mentioned, see below Ann. 138.

[112] It happens in a similar way to Mālavikā at the end of the drama.

[113] Majumdar (see above, Ann. 29) 113.

[114] Ibid., 114, 187–151 B.C.; Louis de La Vallée-Poussin, L'Inde aux temps des Mauryas et des Barbares, Grecs, Scythes, Parthes et Yue-Tchi, Paris 1930, 174.

[115] Ibid., The Cambridge History of India vol. I, 1922, 518.

[116] La Vallée-Poussin, 173; see above, Cloud Messenger: Vidiśā and Ujjain, see above Ann. 28.

[117] Ibid., 180sqq.

[118] Ibid. 182sqq.; Cambridge History 523.

[119] La Vallée-Poussin, 176: Menander; F. Altheim, Weltgeschichte Asiens im griechischen Zeitalter, Halle 1947. 1948, I, 334sq., II, 156: Demetrius; II, 76: Menander.

[120] Majumdar (see above Ann. 29) 113.

[121] Altheim I, 334sq.

[122] Renou (see above Ann. 1) § 1871.

[123] Such a strophe is also lacking in the prologue to "Urvaśī".

[124] Generally called ceṭī, but Vakulāvalikā is called daughter of a slave (dāsī), therefore a slave born at the palace, by the Vidūshaka 37, 8 (ed. Bollensen). See under Ann. 139. Compare B. Subha Rao, Age of Kālidāsa, A Study of the social conditions based on Mālavikāgnimitra, Journal Oriental Institute University Baroda I, 1, 1951, 65sqq. esp. 67.

[125] Geissler (see above, Ann. 103) 26sq.

[126] Subha Rao, 67.

[127] Compare Bollensen, p. 130 in his edition. He was called Maurya according to the Sārārthadīpikā, the commentary by Rama Pisharodi (ed. Mylapore 1929).

[128] Kauṭalya, 129 prac. Compare Mbh. XII, 97, 29.

[129] Mahābhārata I, 71sqq. ed. Sukthankar; I, 76sqq. vulgata; see under Ann. 142: an equally important reference to Aṁśumān.

[130] Or for the queen (varia lectio).

[131] See above, ann. 124.

[132] Intoxication was usual amongst ladies: Subha Rao (see above, Ann. 124, I, 2, 1951, 151sq.

[133] Raghuvaṁśa XIX, 26.

[134] Ibid. 17; see above, Ann. 93.

[135] Mālavikā admits she cannot see enough of him (59, 13 ed. Bollensen).

[136] Or mocking (varia lectio).

[137] Only after the wedding does Pārvatī hardly resist such attacks: Kum. VIII, 14.

[138] See above, Ann. 111.

[139] Since they were to be given as presents, they must have been regarded as slaves, see above, Ann. 124.

[140] This is the meaning given in the Sārārthadīpikā (see above, Ann. 127) 147. PW: Bathing garment; similarly in Subha Rao, I, 2, 152.

[141] This only in Rāmāyaṇa I, 38, 20sq. (C), not in I, 35, 19sq. (A), 40, 19sq. (B), but certainly the banishment, since he behaved evilly towards citizens; the latter also in the Brahmāṇda and Vāyupurāṇa (W. Kirfel, Das Purāṇa Pañcalakṣaṇa, Bonn 1927, 331, 74) and in the Rāmāyaṇa II, 123, 22 (A); 119, 23 (B); 110, 26 (C).

[142] See above, Ann. 129.

[143] According to Kauṭalya (1, 89 ed. Ganapati Sastri) a king, if he only has one such son, should strive to get a grandson.

[144] Patrorṇa, Sārārathadīpikā, 154 and 146, verse 12.

[145] See above, Ann. 27.

[146] Renou (see above, Ann. 1) 204, 207.

[147] See above, Ann. 50.

[148] Renou, 276.

[149] Ibid., 275.

[150] Ibid,. 209, 211, 212. Compare P. K. Gode, Date of Navanītarāma's Commentary on the Raghuvaṁśa, Journal Oriental Institute Baroda University III, 1954, 3, 277sqq.

[151] Renou, 277.

[152] Ibid., 210.

[153] Hillebrandt, 33.

[154] Ibid., 34, 39.

[155] Compare H. Hensgen, Das Verhältnis des Amarasimha zu Kālidāsa, dargestellt an einer Untersuchung des Kumārasambhava 1–8, ZDMG 104, 1954, 2, 377sqq., esp. Ann. 2.

[156] Śarman, Padmapurāṇa and Kālidāsa, Calcutta 1925.

[157] Ruben, see above, Ann. 64.

[158] Renou, 274; Hillebrandt, 96sq.

[159] W. Ruben, Die 25 Erzählungen des Dämons, Helsinki 1934, 94sq.

[160] Kathāsaritsāgara 16, 4sqq.

[161] Hensgen, see above.

[162] Winternitz (see Ann. 1) III, 57, refers to Vāmana etc. Compare Abhinavagupta at Bharata III (Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. CXXIV) p. 321.

[163] Painting by H. von Glasenapp, Indien, München 1925, Plate 40sq. Text p. 49: produced at the present day.

[164] German: R. Tagore, Der Schiffbruch, München 1921, p. 371: Akshay, the intriguer in the novel, says about Hemnalini: "It is well known that asceticism has a great attraction for women. Kālidāsa describes in his poem how Umā mortified her flesh for the sake of a hermit". Umā is Pārvatī).

[165] In greater detail: W. Ruben, Tagore und Kālidāsa, Gedenkband für St. Schayer, Warschau 1957. Compare also H. Zimmer (see above, Ann. 102), who especially compared a Buddhist Jātaka with Tagore's drama.

[166] Compare Ruben (Ann. 46) 29sq.

[167] K. A. Abbas has used this in his film "Awara, the Vagabond": The judge's sister incites the judge against his wife, who had been held by robbers, in this way.

[168] Compare P. Hacker, Moderne Baghavadgitākommentare, ZDMG 105, 1955, 2*, 56sq.*

[169] Swami Vivekananda, Raja-Yoga, Zurich 1937; Karma-Yoga und Bakhti-Yoga, ibid., 1953.

[170] He quotes the story of the wicked hermit, see above, Ann. 166.

[171] Compare W. Ruben, (see Ann. 67) 57sq.—Material on Rsyaśṛnga. K. Fischer, Old Indian Terracottas and Contemporary Art, Roopa Lekha, New Delhi vol. XXXV, 1, 1954.

[172] The following according to R. Palme Dutt, India Today (German ed. Berlin 1951, 324–348).

[173] German: Verlag fremdsprachiger Literatur, Moskau 1953, Vol. 1–2.

[174] Die Große Wanderung, Berlin 1955.

[175] K. Marx und Fr. Engels (see Ann. 71) I, 319sqq. esp. 327.

Note: I have unfortunately not yet been able to make use of Dr. V. Raghavan's work, "Love in the Poems and Plays of Kālidāsa", 1956, which is certainly well worth reading.

After the publication of the German edition of this booklet I read Sri Aurobindo's Kalidasa (Second Series), Pondicherry 1954 (cfr. above note 89). There the analysis of the characters of Purūravas and Urvaśī is very remarkable although I do not agree with every detail. Sri Aurobindo is unfortunately dead, but the discussion about Kālidāsa will go on.